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PUPPETS

A WORK-A-DAY PHILOSOPHY

BY
GEORGE FORBES, F.R.S.

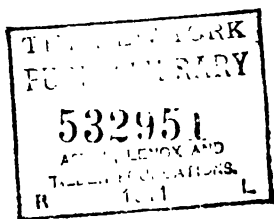
"And yet all time will not suffice to enable man to touch more than the fringe of the things he would like to know."—Sir GEORGE DARWIN.

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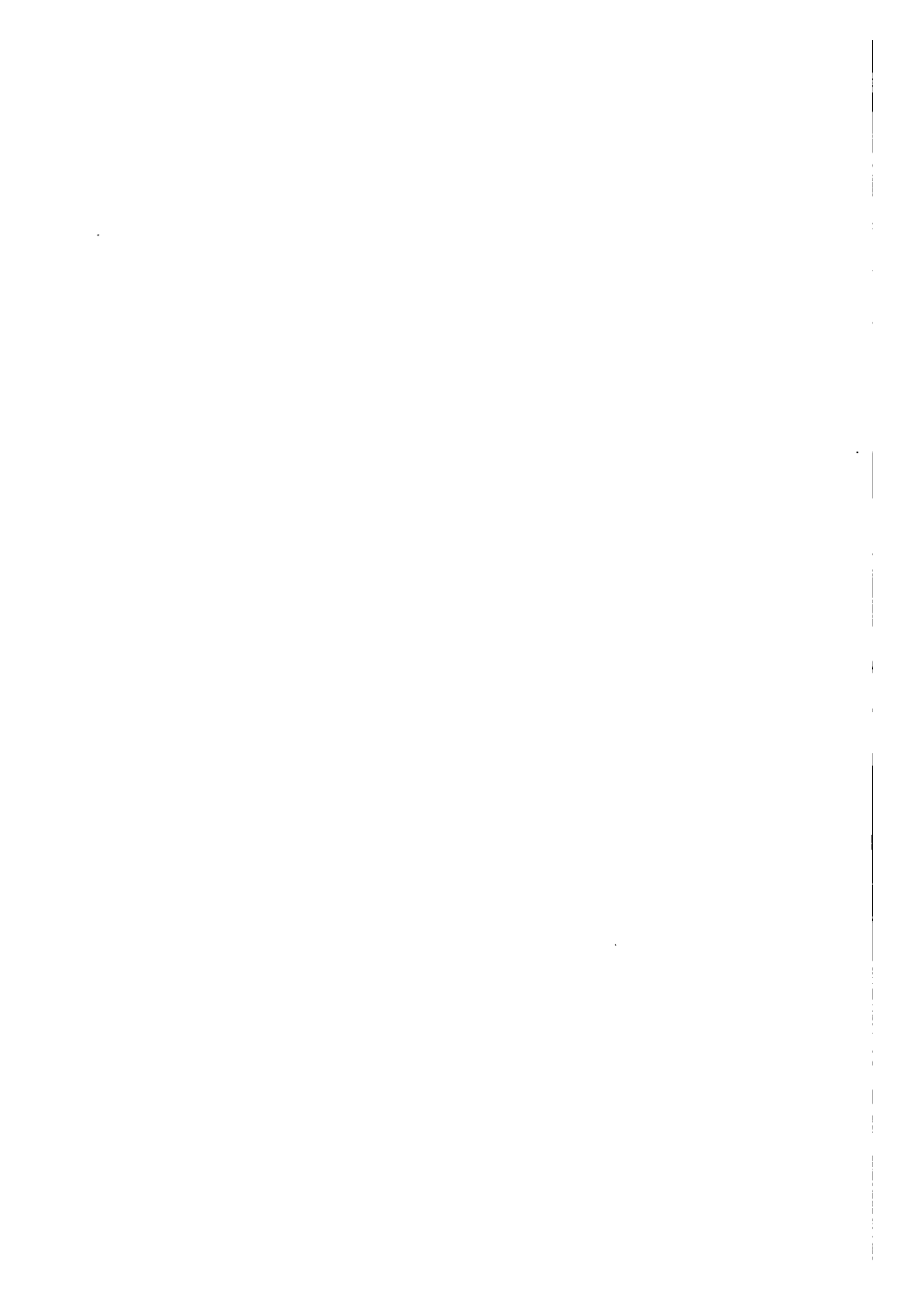
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PREFACE

THE Author desires to say that the character of his hero was inspired by admiration of one who was his most valued friend at college (James Henry Gordon, born 1845, died 1868); and in making use of his name he dedicates this book to his memory, although the views expressed were never discussed, and he does not know what would have been his opinion thereon. The character here drawn must therefore be regarded as fictitious, except for the fact that the Author's task was made easier by the ever-present ideals of physical, mental, and moral excellence that endeared the real James Gordon to all who knew him.

PITLOCHRIE, *June*, 1911.



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PUPPETS

CHAPTER I

PROLOGUE

AFTER strolling down the Avenue Marteau, Bubbles and old Brown passed into the Casino and admired the new rooms which help to make Spa so attractive. They took note of the roulette and baccarat players in the big salon, watching the play, while Bubbles amused himself with an occasional piece on red or black. "Nothing more goes" is the call, and then the whirr of the ball and its rattle, while seeking a resting-place, set many hearts fluttering. "Twenty-three, red, uneven and over" is the verdict. The croupiers rake in the counters. Then paying begins. At last the question comes, "Whose is the full one?" "To me," was called by a sallow youth in

spectacles. "Oh ! but I put mine on twenty-three," was the timid gasp from a girl in mauve seated at one side of the table. The croupier paused. The sallow youth protested, and the girl only stared, bewildered. Thirty-five louis were already being shoved along the board to the youth, who was at one end of the table, when Bubbles, standing on the opposite side to the fair claimant, spoke up in the most English of French, but without the slightest embarrassment, "Pardon, it was Mademoiselle who played on twenty-three. I saw her place it. No other player was on that number, and," looking at the sallow youth, "I defy any one to say the contrary." The sallow one looked down, and, mumbling something to his waistcoat, gave in. The counters were promptly passed to the girl, and the play proceeded.

She blushed perceptibly as she looked up, and thanked Bubbles with a smile and movement of the head that clearly meant "You know what I want to say in thanks, but I

can hardly shout it before all these people.” The gleam from her bright blue eyes and the soft smile centred in pearly teeth quite overcame poor Bubbles. He forgot to lay on red, and could only watch the girl in mauve as she added steadily to her winnings.

Presently the two men moved off and watched a baccarat table, and when Bubbles poured out his feelings about the girl, Brown suggested that some caution should be used at the tables before trusting to appearances. To this Bubbles said quietly but firmly, “Oh, bosh! People of that class don’t come here; we are not at Monte. That girl has never played in her life before. You can see she is a stranger just passing through, and I would trust her in anything. Isn’t she perfectly lovely?”

A little later the girl in mauve with her friend appeared before them, and thanked Bubbles, saying, “I was so glad to see you get the better of that horrid man, but I have to thank you also for bringing me luck. I

had been losing badly until you came. After that I could hardly do wrong, and I have won over fifty louis. It was a shame to be obliged to stop. But it is time to go back to lunch. Won't you join us?"

So it happened that Bubbles and Brown enjoyed an *al fresco* lunch at the Britannique with the mauve girl and her friend, and took them a drive out beyond the lake, to see a meet of the drag, dined them at a restaurant, and heard a concert at the Casino. It was an eventful day.

Before going to bed the two men smoked a cigar in the brilliant room of the club; and Brown suggested that it was quite possible that their two friends, charming as they seemed, might be adventuresses, but Bubbles was up in arms, and rated his friend soundly for his want of sense. Brown declared that you often think people charming when you meet them abroad, but would be disillusioned if you saw them in your own family circle. Bubbles replied that this could easily be tested, for he

intended to get the girl in mauve to visit his people. In fact, he thereupon wrote a long letter to his mother, the Countess of Banff, giving a full account of his afternoon, adding that when he came home he hoped she would invite the girl in mauve to join their house-party.

At breakfast both men were unusually alert and well groomed, and poor Bubbles could not quite control his excitement. It was Brown who made the remarkable discovery that they had never learned the names of their delightful companions of the previous day, who had called each other by pet names, Mignonne and Mabelle. They had just come from Luxemburg, and had been delighted with the place. They had been several days in Spa, and had taken motor drives all round ; and they were expecting to go to England very soon. That was all they had learned. They had all been too much interested in the events of each moment, and had put off the most ordinary enquiries in their certainty of meeting the next day.

It was too early to hope to see their friends, so the two men went to the baths and revelled in the bubbling iron water. Then, while strolling along and looking at the shop windows, they were accosted by the porter of the Hôtel Britannique, who explained that the ladies with whom they had lunched on the previous day had been called away by telegram and had taken train for Flushing, and had instructed him, should he see these gentlemen, to explain their departure.

As the porter went off delighted with his *pour boire*, Bubbles' teeth were set, and turning to Brown he said :

"I know you will think me mad, but please humour me this once. Let us go to the hotel and pack up. We can catch the train for Calais and arrest the fugitives in London when they arrive. I will not let myself lose her. I must and will see her again." So the two friends started on their homeward journey.

Bubbles was a cheery young naval lieutenant with a clear complexion and fair curly

hair, full of fun and good nature, and his eyes as they met yours in conversation had a habit of twinkling in the merriest way, and seemed to express their belief that the whole of life is one big joke. He was devoted to his profession, a crack shot, and the most welcome addition to any shooting-party in Scotland. He could spin yarns of the sea in the smoking-room, or delight the ladies with his skill on the piano and his singing.

Dr. Brown was some years older, and a genial companion on a holiday. At home he was an authority on medical science. The two were old friends, and lately in Malta they foregathered, so that when the younger man was struck down with fever, and nursed to health, as well prescribed for, by his friend, they became more than ever a pair of real chums.

It was a tedious journey to Calais, and the only subject of their talk was their happy afternoon with the two girls. Truly the girl in mauve had been a gleam of sunshine to both of them, and they indulged in many

guesses about her family and what county she came from. There were no doubts about them even in the mind of Dr. Brown.

"What idiots we were," Bubbles exclaimed, "not to get their names from that hotel porter. Never mind, we are sure to catch them at Liverpool Street to-morrow morning. Now, Bruno, I'll tell you what. We are both expected at home this week, so you had better go right on to-night and tell my people that I will come on to-morrow night. I know they will be glad to hear from you that all trace of the fever is now gone, and you have lots more to tell them. It would be nicer for me if you could get that over before I arrive."

So, on reaching Charing Cross, Brown took his luggage to Euston, and Bubbles stopped at his Club, receiving the congratulations of many friends on his recovery and appearance of health. He played a rubber at bridge, but was so absent-minded that his partner grumbled. Poor fellow, he could not dismiss from his thoughts that sweet smile of thanks across

the roulette table at Spa, and the bright laughter and merry voice and clever conversation of the previous afternoon.

Then he swapped naval news with an old shipmate Frank Johnstone, and heard a lot of home news. He was always looking up at the clock, until his friend said, "It is quite early, you don't need to go so soon."

To this Bubbles replied, "I have to be at Liverpool Street at nine to-morrow — or rather this morning. I say, Johnstone, what a rum place the world is! A fellow thinks he can lay out all his plans and settle what he will do. Then up turns some chance meeting, something quite unexpected, and all his plans are gone to the winds. The whole of his life is changed."

"Good heavens!" Johnstone replied; "how you go on. One would think you had got promotion." Then starting up in his chair, "Bubbles, you don't mean to tell me you are in the fish-pond?" (A common expression during the time that Lord Fisher was at the head of the Admiralty.)

Bubbles repudiated this naval suggestion, upon which Johnstone said, "Even so it would not change the whole course of your life. Nothing does that but a girl, but you are not the one to be caught by a petticoat."

After a pause Bubbles said, "Considering all the fun we have had together, at sea and on shore, I hardly like to say what I am going to tell you. It is about a girl, but you can't be expected to understand it, for you have not seen her. I tell you she is as different as possible from any of those whom we used to think such rippers when we have danced or played tennis with them" — and so on, till Johnstone had heard every incident in the short acquaintance, and was himself pleading for a few hours between the sheets, as he too must be up and away to Weymouth early. His parting words were, "I think you are an utter idiot. All the same, I wish you good luck. Really I do."

Bubbles looked very well pleased with the world as he paced the platform of the grimy

East end station, long before 9 A.M. He was picturing to himself the delighted surprise with which he felt confident that the girl in mauve would greet him. Time passed very slowly; at last the train glided up to the platform. He peered into every carriage without success. Then he walked the whole length of the train, noting the members of each party as they left the carriages. Still no luck. Then he mixed with the crowd by the baggage, where the custom-house men were, until it had melted away, and he was left alone, disconsolate.

There was nothing more to be done. He must start for the North that night, and had lots of things to do during the day. He returned to the West end in a discontented frame of mind. One thing, however, cheered him up. There was not a particle of doubt in his mind as to the welcome he would receive from the girl in mauve if ever he should find her.

CHAPTER II

DRAMATIS PERSONAE — INTRODUCING THE HOUSE-PARTY AT KNOCK CASTLE

WE were all at breakfast when Bessy came in with a handful of opened letters. As she sat down at the end of the table she laid them down, saying, "I have news for you, Bubbles is coming."

"Hurrah ! — When ? — Where is he ?" were the various responses from Bunny, Chips, Ethel, and Madge. Bubbles was simply worshipped by his brothers and sisters.

"I don't know. It may be any day now, and he is bringing Dr. Brown too."

"Good old Bruno ; I hope he will have his air-gun with him this time. What fun !"

"Bubbles writes from Belgium, and seems to be enjoying himself. His fever is quite gone, thank goodness ! I suppose we shall

have him now for some time. We must have everything ready for him."

"May we go and help Donald to get the boat ready? Won't Bubbles be in a wax if it's not all right? Will you get him to take us to fish at the Giant's Rock? and may we camp out at the Warri?"

The Warri was a camping hut, called so by Bubbles in memory of some South Sea experiences.

And so they went on in great excitement over the news. Breakfast over, Bessy beckoned to Archie to stay, and showed him the letter from Spa, saying, "Bubbles has never given us reason to worry about him, but of all unconventional things this looks to me the maddest. I hope he has not been getting himself into a scrape." Archie read the letter and said, "Don't you bother, Bessy. I'll back old Bubbles not to make an ass of himself. He does seem hard hit, but I have no fears about him. Besides, Brown is with him, and he is a sensible chap."

"Well, I'll go and see about their rooms, and you had better waken up old Sandy and Donald and the rest. It will be good news for them all. Don't forget, Alec and Mary Malcolm come to-day, and Evelyn Stuart. We must get Mary strong while she is here. They say the baby is a fine little fellow, and so like Alec." Then calling to me she asked, "What are you doing to-day? If the brats go as far as Loch Riven they might take sandwiches, and you could pick them up in the motor in the afternoon. You can take Jack with you, but I can't let you have James Gordon. I want him to help me with my rock-garden. Now I'm off, for Cookie is waiting for orders," and away she sailed to manage the rest of her household.

I never knew such a manager as Bessy, and that is the reason why Knock is the most comfortable house in the kingdom. She directs every one, and sweeps all before her, and yet I believe she is naturally one of the gentlest of her sex, with the desire and the need for a

strong protecting arm, an ivy-clinging-to-the-oak sort of a person. She does not show this now, because Archie is such an easy-going man, and so forgetful, that the place would have gone to ruin if she had not learned to order people about, but never in this world was there a kinder heart. Nobody is too lowly to gain her sympathy — and help too — in their troubles. Her children are all devoted to her, and so also is every individual of her acquaintance, rich or poor.

James Gordon is her cousin, and a great favourite, though rather shy with strangers. He is athletic, and devoted to science and engineering, in which he has made quite a reputation. Although not young, he is active and full of life, with a thoughtful expression and a fine sense of humour.

Jack Malcolm has been with us a week. He is keen on shooting and fishing and all games, and very popular with the brats. His elder brother, the Major, with Lady Mary and their child are to arrive to-day.

I like Jack very much, but James Gordon has always been my hero. I have known him all my life and could fill a book with stories of his adventures, always arising from his go and enthusiasm, mixed with a devilry and obstinacy, which often landed him in hot water, but never failed to pull him through any difficulty, in all parts of the world. It is not easy, however, to get him to tell of his adventures. Every one who really knows him is fond of him, and wonders why he has never married. When questioned on this point, he would say that he had enough consideration for the woman to prevent that ; or else, that he had a lot of other experiments that must be finished first. Once, after much insisting, I heard him utter one of his enigmatical, *nouveau siècle*, paradoxical sayings : "It is true, we bachelors do sometimes sigh for the freedom of married life." I used to think that, if she wished to, there was one of our party who could tell us something more about his reasons.

In his young days he went by the name of

Don Quixote, as he was in constant adventures, protecting the weak and fighting against anything that looked to him like injustice. Once he rescued a beautiful girl from captivity, taking her thousands of miles through a wild country to her betrothed.

As for me, Guy Fraser, I am nobody. I was in the Army, but got so smashed up at Magersfontein that I had to leave, and then Archie and Bessy invented a post for me, to coach the boys. I would not appear in this story but that I used to keep a journal of all that happened, and now they want me to look up my notes and to write an account of all the events and conversations of this memorable month while still fresh in our minds. I have found it very difficult to know what to put in and what to leave out. At first I wrote everything very fully. Then I cut out a tremendous lot so as not to bore the reader, and perhaps I may have overdone it. It would be easy to add much that was told in explanation of some things, but I have done my best.

Knock Castle is an old house that has been added to in different centuries and in different styles of architecture. The result is picturesque. As seen from the outside, one part is an ordinary two-story dwelling of ancient date, but behind this rise towers and battlements, and the main entrance is a round tower, in which you mount a short spiral staircase with wide steps, before entering the large hall decorated with antlers and other trophies. We call this hall the saloon, I do not know why, and there is a great open hearth for a wood fire that always looks cheerful.

In some parts of the interior you might get lost by the cross passages, connecting parts of the edifice that vary in date and level, and you lose all knowledge of your bearings when climbing the old corkscrew staircase.

The oldest garden is Italian in style, and the modern one improves every year under the loving guardianship that Bessy bestows upon her herbaceous borders. She is one of those who would like the world to be one great

garden designed afresh each year under her own eye.

The Castle is on a height surrounded by trees, and a fair-sized river is seen in its rocky bed below, winding its way to the sea-loch about three miles off. There is a fine moor on the hills behind the house, and a burn well stocked with trout. We are miles from the nearest station, and though Archie makes good use of the motor, he and his family are far too fond of horses to give up the stable.

Now, kind reader, we have got through the preliminaries. You have read the prologue, and you are now acquainted with the locality of Knock Castle and with its inhabitants. The difficult part of my task now begins, and I must ask your indulgence if in my efforts to avoid being tedious I may sometimes have failed to make the narration as clear as might be. This is not a novel. Although events were happening that might be utilised in a story, my sole purpose in writing is to enable you to have the opportunity of learning and

appreciating the beautiful theories of James Gordon when he told us his views about what the world is and why we were born, and when he gave us his wonderful theories about babies, about pain, and many other things besides, which delighted every one of us, old or young.

CHAPTER III

ARE THINGS WHAT THEY SEEM?

ON looking back at those days it seems quite extraordinary that a party made up, as ours was, of the usual people whom you meet at a country house, should have got excited in a lot of arguments on subjects to which most of us had never given a thought. But so it was, and it is all in my journal; and it only shows what a man like James Gordon can do, for certainly it was his doing. What began it I can hardly say. Bubbles really opened the debate when he told us about the argument of three men on a gunboat, but I always associate the arrival of Evelyn Stuart with the beginning of these friendly discussions. I had been to Loch Riven to bring back the brats from their expedition, and we were all having tea in the saloon, when the

family omnibus brought her and the Malcolms from the station, and also, to our great joy, Dr. Brown, with news of Bubbles.

After the first excitement, when they had given an account of themselves and their friends in London, and when Brown had told us that Bubbles would be here to-morrow, there was more quiet; and, when tea was over, Evelyn convulsed us all by her account of what she called a dark séance which she attended with her aunt at Arthur Holmes' club. "You know Arthur Holmes, don't you?" she asked.

Jack answered, "Oh, yes, we have heard his name. Isn't he an atheist, or a teetotaller, or something?"

"Not a bit; he is an electrician."

"Didn't I say so?"

"Oh, you goose, Jack. Well, he invited us to his Club, where he showed us the most beautiful electric fireworks. It was splendid; and he took us on to the Carlton to supper, because the chef at the Club was ill. And he

is not a teetotaller, because I remember when he could not get the champagne he wanted, though twenty waiters were about, he said it was a case of 'Waiter, waiter everywhere, and not a drop to drink.' But his lecture was too lovely. He told us such a lot, though I could not remember it all afterwards."

Alec and Jack Malcolm both tried to chaff her about being a blue-stockings, but she insisted that she liked it, and then let out that she had been taken to the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street.

Jack asked, "Isn't that a place, like the old Egyptian Hall, where they do conjuring tricks?"

"Yes," she said, "that's it. Only they call them expurriments, with a broad accent; and you learn wonderful things. Just fancy, the smallest particles of that statue, or anything, are all rushing about and jostling one another, only they are so small that you can't see them even with a microscope. I do so want to know more about it. Nothing is really what it

seems to be when people get to work with their science to find out things."

There was a lot of fun and much nonsense talked about it, and James told us how some of these things had been discovered. It was all very flippant, but it was a new idea to most of us, and set us asking questions, and really interested us for the time. I liked it most because it brought out James Gordon in one of his best points. He made everything appear so perfectly simple when anybody asked for an explanation.

The same night, in the smoking-room, conversation drifted back to the same subject, and Archie said, "I can well see how good it must be to know about electricity and science, but I am too old and too stupid to follow your theories."

To this James replied, "Don't you think you rather exaggerate? Isn't it the word science that you fight shy of?"

"No. What I mean is, I can't understand things I don't see. You talk about the bits of

a statue all rushing about, but I don't see them, and — though, of course, it is my fault — it seems nonsense."

James said, "I know what you mean, but just think. I have heard you tell the whole life of a salmon, how it goes to the sea as a smolt, and comes back as a grilse, turns into a kelt and then into a salmon, and yet you never saw it do these things. I have seen you foretell a change in the weather, avoid a shoal with the yacht in a place where you had never been, and show me where to expect a woodcock in a place you had never shot over. That is all science, only you are too modest to call it so. Or, when you make up cartridges with different charges and see how many pages of Bradshaw they will pierce at forty yards, that is science. The fun of it is in watching things and seeing what will happen, and learning to foretell things, and to do things.

"Now the fellows that potter in a laboratory can't do the same as you; but they try things there to see what will happen. So with an

air-pump and some cotton-wool they find out how fog and mist are made, and with an electrical machine they find out how to drive it all away. Evelyn is quite right in going to see these things when she gets the chance, and I am sure that no one would get more enjoyment than you from seeing in a laboratory how weather is made."

Brown backed up James, saying that the first time you see the leg of a dead frog jump when you touch the nerve with a battery, the experiment fills you with delight, just like when you find out how to make a new stroke at billiards; "and it is just the same sort of delight in both cases."

Alec Malcolm said, "You would take a long time to convince me that the inside of this oak table is all rushing about; I am quite content with it as I see it. But if you get the same pleasure out of these theories and experiments as we do from learning the habits of birds and fish, there may be something in it. But, as Evelyn says, you clever people make out that

we are all idiots and that things are quite different from what they seem to us."

Mr. Campbell, the Presbyterian minister, a quiet but learned old man with white hair, had dined with us, and stayed on for a smoke and a glass of toddy. He now agreed with James and Brown that the wonders of science are an intellectual treat, just like sport and natural history. "But," he continued, "a still greater treat is to read the books of philosophers about the mind, and what the reality of the world is. I get far more enjoyment out of the ingenious writings of Berkeley than from any book of fiction. I daresay, as Dr. Brown says, it is the same kind of enjoyment as learning a new stroke of billiards. I know nothing about that."

James backed up Mr. Campbell, saying, "I think you might go even farther, because these metaphysical discoveries have uses in the ordinary routine of life that few people would ever dream of. It simplifies everything so much to know about these things, and helps

you so much to enjoy life. It puzzles me to explain how it is that although you can read popular books on the vague speculations of the day in science, and can hear the theories explained in popular lectures, nobody seems to take the same trouble to explain the great discoveries that give us real certain knowledge about the mind. Some day I intend to try to write down in simple words the discoveries of philosophers that have helped me to understand and to enjoy the world."

Archie asked, "Won't it be rather dry stuff? I can understand clever people who are fond of study taking to that sort of thing, but it beats me to follow you when you say it helps you to enjoy life."

Alec asked James, "What on earth do you mean? Do metaphysics help people to play cricket, or to shoot straight? How can they help you to enjoy life?"

James answered, "Chiefly by helping me to see the humorous side that there is to most things, and to nearly every great calam-

ity ; and generally by helping me to see things in their true proportions."

I asked if this was not a new fad. James replied, "Not a bit. I have not talked about it, but I have felt the same all my life. If you will let me fill a pipe first, I will tell you why I wish, when I die, to leave behind me a popular sketch of metaphysics and philosophy. One reason is that all through life — and I seem to have enjoyed every hour of it — philosophy has interested me more than anything else. Another is that it helps you to understand, or at least to see, that there may be good reasons for, things that at first look hateful and contradictory. And it helps you to know what to do under any circumstances. It puts you in sympathy with every person, good or bad, and with every living thing. It prevents you from being a prig. It prevents you from finding fault with people's motives. It fills you with admiration for the world, and makes you enjoy both its work and its amusements. It drives away gloomy

thoughts and makes you an optimist. It explains the use and meaning of pain and helps you to bear it. It lets you see that you may have come into the world, not, as many people grumble, without having been consulted, but at your own earnest desire and request. It lets you see how it comes that cruelty is allowed in the world; it makes you tolerant of all opinions, gives you a motive to do your best, and makes you angry with yourself when you don't do it."

Mr. Campbell said, "That is a noble catalogue, and if philosophy has done all that for you, I am not surprised at your desire to tell other people." Then James continued: "Well, the chief reason for my desire to leave behind me a sketch in plain words of what is known in philosophy seems at first perhaps to be too ambitious. It is the hope that this might help other people as I have been helped. Never in my life have I uttered a word about it until quite lately. But on the few occasions when I have let myself go, the thanks I got

were so obviously genuine that I made up my mind to try to save other people from the trouble of reading all the dry books that have been written, just picking out those parts that go to make a satisfactory system."

Mr. Campbell asked when he began this study. James said, "It is no new fad. I will explain how it happened. Before I went to Cambridge I was at a Scotch University. They are a hard-headed lot there. Every Scotsman is a philosopher at heart, and I may tell you that among the keenest are A. J. Balfour and R. B. Haldane. Archie, you know them both. Don't you think that philosophy seems to have helped them to enjoy life and to do a life's work? Well, we were taught logic and metaphysics and philosophy, and so I was set thinking. I tried to find the flaws in every proposition, and gradually worked out my own system, which, I suppose, is only a new mixture of old materials. At Cambridge I was working at mathematics but spent my spare time on philosophy, and got

my system clear enough to see that it had no inconsistencies, that it agreed with all my experience so far, gave a full explanation of many difficulties, satisfied my feelings as well as my reason, and was not based on the authority of any of the great writers.

“After taking my degree I said to myself: ‘Now, young man, you have spent enough time on this. Your life’s work lies before you. Your system tells you what you have to do, and why. Go, then, and do it. Be content with having a system of philosophy which satisfies you at present. Stick to the work of your life. Meanwhile, without wasting time upon speculation, you can be taking note if your further experiences agree with your system.’ I saw that this was good advice, and I took it. The system worked splendidly, and of late years, when I was free to take it up again in earnest, I found very little to alter, either from my own experiences or from comparing my system with what others had written.

"There now, I have monopolised the conversation too long, and I won't speak of it again. When I die you can read my book."

There was a general growl, and a hope expressed that we might hear more of the system. Anyway, why should not we have the book before he died?

James told us, because its chance of being useful would be spoilt if people could say it was written for money or to make a reputation; besides, he could always be improving the form of it.

"But then," Mr. Campbell suggested, "there will be opponents, and you will be wanted to support your views."

"Not a bit," James replied. "The book will not be written to convince people but to show the way to think it out for themselves."

Mr. Campbell maintained that no man in writing such a book could foresee the kind of difficulties that some people might have in following the writer's meaning; and it would be unfair to shirk the removal of these difficulties.

James said he would consider that point, "but the book must be anonymous in any case, to make the readers rely on their own judgment, and not on authority. People who quote the opinions of Hegel, or Darwin, or Kelvin, or Huxley, or the Pope, are conscious of a defect in their own reasoning."

"Well, here is luck to your book," said Alec, as he poured out a whisky and soda, "and I confess I am getting quite anxious to know more about your system. If it was any one else, I would say he was talking foolishness. But, knowing you as we do, none of us here could say that. Mr. Campbell, you have the credit of having started him on his system. I suppose you can assure us that he is not humbugging us."

"No fear of that. If you can get the oracle to speak, I advise you to listen," said the minister; "but now I must start on my way home, so good-night to you all." We went to the door and saw him off, and so to bed.

What I have now written is copied directly

from my journal as I wrote it that evening. I recollect how bewildered I was at what Gordon told us. I had known him all my life and had the greatest admiration for his energy and his devotion to any work he had in hand, whether this was a game, an astronomical calculation, a yacht race, an experiment with electric machines, or drawing out specifications. But in all these years it had never occurred to me that he would ever bother his head about philosophy, a subject that I thought must be too vague and shadowy to appeal to his practical mind. I found out, however, in a few days that he considered this to be far more important than all the scientific or practical work that he had done.

From now onwards James Gordon's philosophy became to each one of us, young or old, a revelation and a joy that quite surprised us, up to the time when he disclosed his wonderful theory of babies and his views about why we came into the world. This is what I am trying to put into writing. I have been

obliged to introduce some irrelevant matter to make it clear what kind of people we were who took so much pleasure in what was told us; that we were neither book-worms nor fools, but just ordinary people, enjoying the world in a very ordinary way. I only hope that I may succeed in making it even half as interesting as James Gordon did, and that it may appear to others, as it did to us, a very human work-a-day philosophy.

CHAPTER IV

BUBBLES ASKS US CONUNDRUMS ABOUT DREAMS

I HEAR you kept poor Mr. Campbell very late last night. It is too bad. He is getting on in years." This was Bessy's greeting to us at breakfast next morning.

Alec Malcolm answered, "Oh, he is all right, and will be, I expect, when we are palsied old men. He is pretty tough. It was James who kept us all up, talking a lot of nonsense."

James explained, "We were only discussing Evelyn's pursuit of science. Alec won't have it that things are not always just what they seem. I think he believes that the earth is flat, and that the sun goes round it once a day. I suppose Bubbles will arrive late to-day?"

Bessy said, "I expect he will arrive in the

afternoon. Do any of you brats want to meet him at the station?"

"May I? May I?" came from all of them.

"There is no reason why some of you should not, if you can make room in the motor for his luggage."

After breakfast, Bessy learned from Bruno all about the Spa affair. She said, "I can see he is rather taken with this girl, and I am afraid she may be one of the ordinary schemers of these watering-places."

Bruno said, "I tried to impress Bubbles with that idea, and failed miserably, as I deserved. If I am any judge, she is one of the nicest girls I ever saw, and, if I did not know that you disapprove, I would congratulate you on the impression that Bubbles evidently made."

When Bubbles arrived there was great rejoicing, as he had not been at home for some years. He told us he had a narrow shave of not being able to come. "When taking my ticket at Euston I found that my pocket-book

was gone. It had been stolen. I was disgusted at having to wait till next day, when, to my astonishment, a man I had never seen before, offered me the loan of a five-pound note. I was surprised, but it was a great relief, and I did thank him in real earnest. He wrote his address on a card, and said I could send the money any time."

Alec said, "You were in luck to find a man so confiding. He must be a bad judge of faces; don't you think so, Archie? But who on earth is your friend?"

"That is just where the trouble comes in. I could not read his card by the light in the train, and now I find I can't make out a word of it. It has a name engraved, Mr. B. Smith, and on that side a pencil note, *Coutts at 11 A.M.* But that can't be his name. The words he wrote are on the other side. Here it is. Can you read it, father?"

Neither Archie nor any of us could make head or tail of it. Bubbles was quite worried. "What am I to do? I must find out who he

is. I might advertise. What will the man think of me if I don't get a clue? This note about Coutts might be an appointment at the Bank. I am afraid I shall have to go back to town to-morrow and make inquiries at Coutts', and also at Euston. Besides, I ought to report the theft of my purse at Scotland Yard. Yes, I will do that. What a nuisance!"

We all tried to dissuade him, but without effect. He was determined to go. In fact, those of us who knew about the girl in mauve, of Spa, could see that the poor fellow was much upset, and wanted to be continually on the move.

At dinner he was made to tell some of his experiences at sea, because they had hardly seen him since he was on a gun-boat in the Pacific. He had been delighted with the Islanders, and said they had more natural kindness and thought for others than any race in the world. He wants all our young missionaries to go through a course of practical Christianity by learning from these people.

But he confessed that a long stay at a Chinese port grew tedious. "You get so tired of talking about the same things to the same men. We used to invent new things to argue about. For example, if you start from Chi fu, and always sail southeast, where will you land? There is a lot to say on different sides of that argument, and it lasted quite a week. Then I started a puzzle that never came to an end. It occurred to me in bed one night. I bet Johnstone that he could not prove that the world is not a dream. He tried for six months and never got near it. We must thresh that out in the smoking-room."

After dinner we had music, and Bubbles' tenor voice was a great addition. Before he joined us in the smoking-room, Bessy took him to her boudoir, to draw him out about the girl in mauve. There was no need for diplomacy. He was bursting with impatience to talk, and said, "I suppose when you got my letter you thought me rather hasty, but you wouldn't if you saw her. She is utterly

different from all other girls, as you would see in a moment if you were with her. First, her looks and expression; then the things she says, and her voice; the way she moves, and everything about her. I can't describe it. You must see her, and when you look into her eyes as she smiles you will fall in love with her. I know you will. The wonderful thing about it is that I can see she has been made in order to be loved, and she has had no notion of it until we met, and you must not think {me conceited, mother, when I say I am perfectly sure that I have made her feel this the same way as I do myself."

Bessy said that she was sure his judgment must be right. "I should like to see her. Perhaps you may not meet again; but if you do, and find your opinion changed, it is quite easy at this stage to break it off. I am so glad you have told me all about it. Now be off to the others; I must see Ethel before she is asleep. Good-night, dear boy."

Over our pipes Bubbles began again on the

dream theory. "Now, Alec, can you prove to me that you are not dreaming?"

Alec stared at him and said, "But this is not a dream. I see that table. It is a real table. I hit it and it sounds, and it hurts my hand. That is real enough."

"You mean, that if the senses of seeing, hearing, and feeling all make you think it real, it must be so. Well, in a dream would you not have the same evidence? and that would be all wrong."

Alec answered that, in addition, he had seen the table yesterday, and would see it again to-morrow; "and again," he added, "all the others bear me out: they all see it and know that it is real."

To this Bubbles answered, "But they are only part of the dream, and in any dream you have the same evidence that all your dream is real, and yet that evidence is all wrong."

Jack said that we must find some test for telling real tables from dream tables. "I

think I take your side, Bubbles ; you can't find a proof that the world is not a dream."

To which Alec promptly replied, "Nor can you find a proof that the world is not real."

"Bravo !" cried Bubbles. "It's like being on the old *Mosquito* again — the same old arguments we had at Chi fu."

Bruno said that life differs from a dream by the permanence of the things in it, and the continuity of events that follow the fixed laws of nature. "These," he said, "are all at variance with the illusions of a dream, and common sense compels us to believe that the world is not a dream or imagination."

Archie said he did not feel much impressed by that argument. "Common sense does not admit that the bits of a statue are rushing about. Common sense will not accept the ether that you tell us fills all space. Common sense is very sceptical about atoms and these electrons you told us about. As Evelyn said, You scientific people prove that things are not

what they seem, then why not a dream? At the same time it is a stupid idea, and I can't look upon it as at all likely. Let us go to bed."

"Well, what do you say?" asked Bubbles. "Isn't that a good sort of conundrum for three lone officers on a gun-boat for three months in a Chinese port? What do you think about it. James?"

James said, "I don't like the word dream, because our dreams are generally ridiculous. If you had said that all the things in the world are a vision or a kind of thought, I agree, All our knowledge of the world is a mental knowledge. The world has a definite, real, tangible existence in our minds, and I see no gain by attributing to it any other kind of existence for which we have no evidence. A chair or a table is nothing to you or to me except a bundle of qualities, and thoughts of what we can do with it and what sensations we can get from it. Any other kind of existence that people have accustomed themselves to

give to it is a useless fiction. But we can't go into all that now. Archie says it is bed-time, and you and I, Bubbles, had better obey orders although you are not on the *Mosquito*."

CHAPTER V

OUR NEIGHBOURS AT GLEN BUIE

WE had some not very distant neighbours who had taken Glen Buie for some years, but were strangers to us because they had never happened to be at home while we were at Knock. They were Americans, and reported to be nice people with plenty of energy ; and although their visitors were known to include many of the so-called *smart set*, still we knew that they were worth knowing.

At lunch, when our plans for the afternoon were generally made up, Bessy said, "Do you care, Jack, to drive me in the motor ? I want to take Mary to see Glen Buie. She ought to see the gardens, as they are all arranged so as to reach perfection during this month, when the Porters make sure of being at home. And, besides, I want to get some gardening hints

from Mr. Porter, as he is an authority. Are you busy, Bubbles? They are worth knowing, and the girls are said to be good at lawn-tennis."

But Bubbles was going to look up Donald and the others, and was going with Alec and Bruno, who wanted to try a new rifle.

The rest of us settled to go with Archie to see how the new reservoir for the electric light is getting on. It was a steep climb at the back of the house, up the side of a tumbling burn that fell down a kind of crack in the hillside, covered with foliage, and birch trees, and ferns, and briars, and brambles, and wild flowers. Sometimes there was a path, at other times we were climbing the rocks in the bed of the burn. Gleams of sunshine came here and there through the branches. It was a lovely scramble.

When we reached a more level place Bunny looked for trout and showed us the places where he had fished. Then the boys began to question James about Evelyn's atoms. He

told them that the atoms in her statue would all fly away, and the statue disappear, but for a force called cohesion keeping them together. Also, that our atmosphere would fly away from the earth if gravitation did not pull the particles back. Whenever these brats had a walk with James, they were able to learn far more than I could teach them.

Bunny said, "I suppose Evelyn is quite right, and the more you know the less do things seem to be like what we thought they were at first?"

James agreed with this, and told him that we are very apt to get wrong ideas into our head at first from other people. Then we come to look on these ideas as being some kind of instinctive knowledge, and we call them common sense.

When we came to the reservoir we found the factor overlooking the men at work. While he explained the work to Archie, James was examining the materials, counting the meshes in the sieve for the sand, feeling the fineness

of the cement powder, and squeezing a handful of mixed concrete to judge of its moisture. The factor noticed this, and came over to tell him the proportions he used, and was delighted when James told him how to get a finer ground cement that was better and cheaper in the end. James took as keen an interest in this little job as in the big works he had carried out costing millions of pounds.

On our way down the hill we had a race, and then the brats wanted to know all about engineering from James, who told them of the ancient wonders he had seen — the canals and Great Wall of China, and the Pyramids in Egypt — and then about modern railway-making, and the grand ideas and works of Brunel.

James and I happened to get detached from the others, and in passing through the village I was struck with the affectionate esteem with which he was greeted by all the people. Even the little children had a bright moment of pleasure shown in their faces as he passed.

One little girl about nine years old ran across the road with a printed leaflet in her hand, which she offered to him. He took it, and finding it to be the advertisement of some Sale, said, "It is very nice of you to give me this, my dear, but it is of no use to me."

"I know that," said the little mite, "but it is *such* a long time since I have seen you."

We got home for tea and found Bessy beaming with experiences. "Mr. and Mrs. Porter are quite delightful. He can't be more than forty, and he is so nice. I wish you had been there, Bubbles; they are certainly an acquisition. But oh, it was too killing! They have the Cheathams and a lot of that set with them, and we interrupted them in a boisterous game on the lawn. At first they were rather on their p's and q's till the Cheathams drew them out. They seemed to have rather a merry party. The Cheathams introduced last night the latest drawing-room game of their set—saving life at sea. It seemed to be rather rowdy, but you know what Cheatham

is. But the Porter girls are too sweet. Are they not, Mary? Jack could not keep his eyes away from Ida, the eldest, and I don't blame him."

Jack said, "The best fun was the story about what's-his-name, Porter's agent in Paris, who has come a cropper. The man's valet did not know what to do, as his master sent him to meet Porter to get his opinion on some business. It appears that White — yes, that is his name — has been jilted by an actress, and took to absinthe, and went and abused her before a lot of people in a *café*. Then, while Porter was telling us this, Ida said, 'But I always thought that absinthe makes the heart grow fonder'; and how they all shrieked at this. When Porter told us of the difficulty he had in pumping the valet, and how little he did get out of him, Cheatham said, 'I like that man. He knows his duty and he knows the good old rule, *Discretion is the better part of valet*.' Really, they were quite bright. At least I know that I laughed more at the rot

we talked in the half hour of our visit than I have done for a long time. It was partly the way they said things. Porter himself told his experiences in such a quiet, solemn way without a smile."

Mary was enthusiastic about Mrs. Porter and the girls, especially Ida. Bessy said, "They have promised to come here soon. Bubbles, I wish you could stay on so as to be here when they come. I know you would like them. I enjoyed Mr. Porter's account of the way he deals with burglars, as if he was quite in the habit of meeting them. He said that when they come into his house he does not threaten them with a revolver, but says, 'If you don't get out of the house, I will turn on the electric light and photograph you.' After that he says you can hear them rush out of the house, and watch them tripping across the lawn like frightened hares."

CHAPTER VI

THE ORGANS OF SENSE

WHEN I was cutting out from my narrative a lot of the incidents that did not seem to be necessary I intended to dispense with the present chapter, but the others all said that it was needed to help people to appreciate Gordon's theory of babies. Now, as Gordon's is the best theory of babies that has appeared, and is the only true theory, and as any one who has babies without knowing Gordon's theory is like a man who marries without knowing Bunbury, — for these reasons I let this chapter remain, but please remember, indignant reader, that I wanted to cut it out.

It was a bracing sunny morning, and we were all on the terrace, while Evelyn was getting a lesson in photography from Jack. Bunny was

looking at the landscape on the ground-glass of the camera, and asked Bruno how the picture came there. He answered, "The camera works very much the same as your eye." Then he was made to explain, which he did, as I thought, in regular schoolmaster style, not a bit like the way James would do it.

"This glass in front is what makes the picture. It is called a *lens*, and acts as the front part of your eye does, to throw a picture at the back of your eye, on your retina, which takes the place of this ground-glass."

Ethel asked, "What is Bunny's iris that makes him have blue eyes?"

"That is the same as this iris diaphragm in the camera. I can make the hole in it larger or smaller, so that you can make it small if there is plenty of light, and that gives you a sharper picture."

"But Bunny's eye can't be worked like that," Ethel said.

"Can't it? Let us see. Bunny, turn your back to the sun, and look at the inside of this

black umbrella. Now, Ethel, look at the size of his pupil. Remember how big it is. Now let us turn him round to face the sun."

Ethel exclaimed, "Why, it is nearly closed up. Wonderful! How did he do it?"

"I don't know the mechanism, so as to make a working model, but it is all due to reflex action. You see how much his eye is like the camera. Then, again, look at the picture on the ground-glass. You see that the hills far away are quite sharp, while the rose-bush close to us is fuzzy. I turn this screw, and now you see the rose-bush is sharp and the hills fuzzy. So also Bunny can work his muscles to make near or distant things sharp, but he learned to do it when he was a baby, and now does it without effort."

The brats were much interested and amused, and asked why the picture in the camera is upside down. Bunny said, "My eyes don't give me a picture upside down."

"Oh, yes, they do," Bruno said, "but when you were a baby you did not know which was

the top, and which the bottom, of anything. So when by feeling you came to call one part of a thing the top, you then knew which part of your retina to call the top, and it happened to be the bottom."

Bunny said this was nonsense, and that he knew quite well which part of his eye was the top.

"No, you don't," said Bruno, "and I will prove it to you. Shut your eyes while I press the back part of your eye-ball where the retina is. You feel my finger on it, exciting your retina, and you think you see light."

"Yes, just like a ball of light."

"Now notice. I touch the lower part. You feel my finger there, but the ball of light seems to be at the top. Now I press high up, and the spot seems to be low down."

Bunny was astonished. "You are quite right. All the same, I don't believe it."

Evelyn said, "Isn't that just what I told you. Nothing is what it seems to be when you scientific people set to work to find out things. What a lecture you have given us."

Jack wanted to know what the retina is made of, and Brown told him that it is a layer of microscopic rods and cones, all connected with a bundle of fibrous threads going to the brain, and the bundle of threads is called the nerve. Asked what the nerve does, he said that nerve tissue has the property of carrying a stimulus to the cells of the brain. Gordon asked what he meant by having that property. "Does it mean giving a pull as you would to a bell, or sending an electric current as you would with electric bells?"

Brown said, "To tell you the truth, we do not know what action takes place beyond the fact that electricity plays a great part, and in such a case we always speak of a thing as having some property. In time we will learn better what it is we mean."

Gordon asked, "Is there a separate nerve-thread connecting each rod or cone with one brain-cell?"

Bruno answered, "Speaking as professional to unprofessional, I would say yes."

Speaking as man to man, I would say I don't know."

Alec said, "I like your candour. I suppose you doctors have a lot to learn before you will be able to make or even to imagine the working model of a man?" and Bruno agreed cordially.

GORDON. "I suppose our other organs of sense have nerves leading to cells in the brain?"

BROWN. "Yes."

GORDON. "When I speak to the telephone may I describe that as speaking to your ear? and may I call the wires that go to the stables the nerve? and may I call the instrument at the stables the brain-cells?"

BROWN. "There is some resemblance. But analogies have this danger, they make you think that you understand a thing when you do not."

GORDON. "Still, I suppose with each sensation three things are stimulated (or acted on in some way) — an organ of sense, a brain-

cell, and a nerve joining these. And we have no knowledge and experience of the world except when we have thoughts of these actions."

BROWN. "That is true. Our minds seem to have no knowledge of what is going on in the world except their knowledge of these actions."

Here Jack protested loudly. "That is nonsense. I know lots of things that I never saw or felt, things I have read in books and things people have told me."

GORDON. "Quite true, but you must use your eyes to read, and your ears to hear. Try, Jack, as you may to find an exception, and you will fail. You get absolutely no knowledge about the world except when you have thoughts of the feeling of having your nerves or brain-cells acted on. It follows from that conclusion that all knowledge of the world comes from the kind of thought which we call sensation, that without the thoughts called sensations we should have no knowledge even of the existence of our own bodies, and of

the nerves and brain-cells, and that these exist for us only as thoughts."

Alec Malcolm could not stand this. "You must not suppose that we can swallow all your arguments. First, you tell us that every bit of that boulder is rushing about, though I have known it as a peaceable stone all my life; and now you want us to believe that we don't see and feel the stone at all, but only have thoughts of seeing and feeling it. You throw common sense to the winds, and make Bunny doubt his own senses. Much better stick to your engineering and athletics. Come on now, James, and have a round of golf with me till lunch time."

"All right, I will, but first Evelyn is going to photograph us in a group, and to see what this wonderful focussing diaphragmatic model of an eye can do."

Afterwards Bessy had a talk with Bruno about Bubbles. She had been much taken with Ida Porter, who, she hoped, might distract his thoughts from the girl in mauve.

Bruno said that for his own part he could not imagine a more suitable wife for Bubbles than the girl in mauve, but he saw that very likely they might never meet again.

Bessy said, "I am quite certain that I know Bubbles, and that he will look upon Ida as nearly perfect, and I don't mind if I bet you a shilling that he ends by marrying her. He has a very strong power of will."

"All right," Bruno said. "I don't know anything about his power of will, but I know a lot about his power of won't, and I bet a shilling he marries the girl in mauve."

That evening we went in to dinner by lot. I drew Tweedledum, and soon found Tweedledee in the person of Mary Malcolm. She had not heard James' views on philosophy, but had a great admiration for him, though she had got to know him only after her marriage. She had lots to tell me about his travels, and about some of the work he had done for friends of hers. You may well believe that she had a willing listener to the praises of my hero.

I told her that James seems to have lost all his old reserve these last days, and that I felt sure we were going to hear something from him that would open our eyes, though in all my life I had never suspected him of studying philosophy. I told her that he never starts talking about a thing without making it interesting; that I have listened to his description of the irrigation works in India that sounded like a fairy tale, and to an account of our finance in Egypt that was like a poem.

When the ladies left us Bubbles said to Gordon, "Father and I have been discussing your thought-world. It is a funny notion at first that we have no influence on the world except through the muscles of our bodies. But, of course, it is true. We can't speak a word, nor write a letter, nor use a threat, nor make a sign without using our muscles. The longer you think of it the more certain it appears. And so with our knowledge of the world. Every bit of it comes from seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. We

have no evidence about the existence of anything, nor about what is going on round us, except when we have thoughts about brain-cells being affected by nerves, and these by the eyes or other organs of sense. It is a new way of looking at the world.

“Father and I could see that a sensation of seeing or hearing is not the picture on the retina nor the vibrating of the drum of your ear. Nor is it what goes on in the attached nerve, nor in the bit of brain-stuff at the other end of the nerve. We could see clearly enough that the sensation is only a thought.

“In that case our knowledge of our own bodies and organs of sense, and nerves, and brains is all nothing but a thought — I mean it is mental not material.

“In that case your body is not yourself. Your real self is the mental part of you; and the real world seems to be a mental world, all an imagination. It really is very much like the Chi fu dream theory. Now, what bothers us is that there is no need for anything to

be real, not even your own body and brain. Doesn't it knock the stuffing out of life?"

Gordon said, "Not at all. You are going through a stage when you find that you have always put a wrong meaning on the word *real*. Every one has to pass through that stage. When a man's reason first tells him that the real world is a mental phenomenon, his feelings revolt at the idea of life being only a dream. But then he notices that a thought-world of things and people that are not fleeting, but permanent, not erratic, but governed by fixed laws of cause and effect, is as full of responsibilities and interests as a world looked at in the common way. In fact, it does not alter our relation to the world one bit.

"When a man once realizes what a thought-world means, he sees that nothing is changed; and when he finds how clear it makes all the difficult problems of life, he accepts the philosophic view as eagerly as a scientific man accepts the atomic structure of matter."

Archie said, "I am a stupid old fogie, and it

takes me a long time to get hold of a new idea. I quite see that if the world is all a thought or, as you may call it, only an imagination, it is none the worse for its new name, and need not be like a dream. Only, I need time to take it all in. But tell us how this way of looking at it clears away your difficulties."

Gordon replied, "In a hundred ways that I will tell you of later. But here is one example. If you suppose matter to exist as a separate thing from mind, as most people do, how can my thoughts act upon my muscles? and how can my material eyes act upon my mind and give me thoughts of seeing things? By supposing things to have a separate material existence, besides the mental existence of which we are certain, people have raised up an obstacle, and then complain that they cannot see beyond it.

"There is another difficulty that is cleared away when we think of death. If our life here is a kind of dream, death may be like awaking, when we shall know that life has been a kind

of dream. We shall find that all the people who had died, our parents and friends, are awake, and we, like them, have no longer any puppet to be looking after. I won't develop that idea just now, but you can see, if we have done well, how these friends will rejoice when we awake, and welcome us with joy and a cry of *well done*. But if we have done ill, you can see how grieved they would be. Then think of our own remorse on meeting those we have wronged, when every act and motive is clear as day. This is heaven or hell, and no mistake. But I won't pursue a mere fancy like that. It is far best, in philosophy, to stick to rigid arguments derived from our experiences in this thought-world."

"Thank you, James," Archie said; "I have no doubt that you have much to tell us, and I am quite sure that we are all very keen to hear it. Let us join the ladies."

CHAPTER VII

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE, AND PAIN

WHILE Bubbles was preparing for his journey to London, Bessy and Bruno had several sly jokes about their bet. She had been in great hopes that before he went, the Americans would turn up, and that he would see her counter-attraction, Ida Porter. But this was a false hope. Bessy was much worried at seeing how restless Bubbles was, so Bruno, having something to do in town, said he would go up with him.

In the afternoon Bubbles drove the ladies in the motor to sketch from a point called the Queen's View. Alec and Jack were going to fish, and Archie had to go and see about repairs to a farmhouse. The rest of us walked to meet the ladies and bring them home.

Bubbles and Bruno could motor back to catch the train.

During our walk James got Bruno to talk about his own hobbies, and we had a wonderful account of nerves and ganglionic centres and brain-substance and reflex-action. Here Brown was in his element, and could tell us everything without having to use technical words.

At last we reached the top of a rise in the road, with a rocky knoll on the left, with larches and heather, and a lovely view. Deep below, the river was winding to us out of a lake stretching miles away; rugged ranges of hills to the left; faint sugar loaf hills, fifty miles away, over the end of the loch; and grassy hills on the right with some farms, and the late hay heaped in many fields, all bright in the afternoon sunshine.

It was a lovely scene for a sketch, and already the ladies of our party were at work. Bessy, who never lost an opportunity of enriching her rock-garden, carried off Dr. Brown

to hunt for sedums and saxifrages. James sat down beside Mary to help her with suggestions, while himself making a rapid sketch. Then he started one of his conundrums: "Can you tell me, Mary, what is it that makes beauty in a view like this, and what is the reason of our pleasure in music, and why do we laugh when a man sits on his own top hat? These things puzzle me more than anything. Books have been written on all three subjects, but I am none the wiser for having read them."

MARY. "No, I don't invent theories. I only know that I love scenery and music. By the bye I hear that you have a wonderful idea of what heaven is to be. I should be quite happy with lovely scenery and music if I might vary it as I pleased, only I must have people I care for to help me to enjoy it. Then, I think, eternity might lose its terrors for me."

JAMES. "And you would not need the man with the top hat?"

MARY. "I do not think he is absolutely necessary."

JAMES. "Well, Mary, perhaps you may have all that you suggest, and a great deal more. Of one thing I am quite sure, nothing that we can imagine you to have is a measurable fraction of what you deserve."

MARY. "That is nice of you. But seriously, I should like to hear about your system that Alec seems so much taken up with. From what he says I fear you are perilously near to being a Christian Scientist. Do tell me that you are not."

JAMES. "Certainly I can do that, although these people have borrowed a lot of truth from philosophers, some of the plums, and have mixed them with rubbish and offered the mixture to the world — for money."

MARY. "But do you believe in their healing powers?"

JAMES. "Well, you know that they recognize the real man to be the thinking spirit, and that the world, and his own body and brains are an imagination lasting during his present life. This makes them far less anxious about

the ills of their bodies than other people; and they worry less about the pain and discomfort their bodies are going to suffer, and I daresay in this way they materially assist the healing power of nature, if not quite to the extent that they claim."

MARY. "But they tell us that there is no such thing as pain."

JAMES. "Surely, if they convince their patients that pain is all imagination, they prove their case."

MARY. "Oh, that's rubbish. I grant you that for imaginative hysterical people Christian Science may be good; but don't tell me that pain is all imagination. Have you ever had really bad toothache?"

JAMES. "Please don't make me out to be a supporter of these people. I don't know much about them. In fact, to tell you the truth, I got all that I know about Christian Science from Mark Twain. But as to the toothache, I have often had it badly. Once, after suffering two days and nights, it seemed un-

bearable, and I went to the dentist to have the tooth pulled. I rang the bell and the servant took about two minutes to answer it. During that time the toothache had been completely cured, by the diversion of my thoughts to the greater pain that I was expecting. So far as toothache goes, I am sure that its terrors are largely due to imagination."

MARY. "Now you are trifling. It may have been imagination in the case of your toothache, but it is absurd to say that all pain is imagination."

JAMES. "I am not so sure of that. The Spartans were brought up to refuse to acknowledge pain. Before the days of chloroform our sailors used to watch with interest the amputation of their own legs, and they dipped the stumps in boiling tar. When we were children Spartanism was encouraged much more than it is with the modern child. We all thought it cowardly to acknowledge a hurt; and in taking that line we succeeded in not feeling the pain, at least not so much. Do you

know, Mary, how to find out if a person can keep a secret? You bend their little finger between your finger and thumb, pressing your thumb on the tip of their little finger and your forefinger on their second joint, and squeeze it till the tip nearly touches the second joint. If they don't scream, however hard you squeeze, they can keep a secret. We, as children, used often to try this, and I am glad to remember that, tried by this test, I could always keep a secret. I always thought hard about something else."

MARY. "But you must have felt the pain though you did not scream."

JAMES. "That depends upon your definition of pain. Of course I felt the squeeze, but it did not hurt. I rather think that you won't even feel the squeeze if your thoughts were at the moment sufficiently absorbed otherwise, if, for instance, you were looking at Jack while he murdered Alec by strangling him."

MARY. "What a dreadful man you are

to imagine such horrors. But why on earth should we go and imagine pain if it is not there."

JAMES. "Perhaps you might get an answer by watching a child that has fallen down making up its mind whether it should cry or not. Don't you think it likely that our first idea of pain is a dread of not being able to use the puppet we control if it is injured, and sometimes a dread of losing mental control over the puppet if our thoughts are too strongly directed to the sensation?"

"Now, if you saw your baby get its finger squeezed in the door-hinge, would not this dread of injury make you feel the pain almost as much as the baby? I don't know. But there, you have washed out the sunlight on the farm-house, and lost the high lights in your sketch, by that stroke of your brush."

MARY. "Oh, bother my sketch. I can do nothing. Let me watch while you paint. But do let me hear more about pain. Do make me believe that it is all imagination."

JAMES. "Well, as I was saying, you do not notice a feeling, however painful, if you can rivet your attention on something else. Have you never noticed what a sensible mother does — I have no doubt you do it — when a child falls or gets a knock. She does not condole. She directs the child's attention to the beautiful carriage driving past, or to the funny toy; and the child beams with joy. If you have something exciting to distract your attention you don't feel pain. A bullet went through my ear in the last Russo-Turkish war, but I knew nothing of it until after the skirmish, when an officer beside me drew attention to the stream of blood. That was trivial, but I have known two men who were mauled by lions in Africa without having any pain. One was Dr. Livingstone, whose arm was broken. The other was Johnny Baird, whose flesh was torn by a lion in Abyssinia. Neither of them felt any pain when the lion was on top of them. I believe there are many such cases on record. Their thoughts were

fully occupied with plans for escape and guessing what the lion would do next.

"So also the martyrs endured burning at the stake with a smile on their faces by forcing themselves to think of the agonies of Christ.

"It is quite certain that, if you have the strength of mind to distract your attention from a hurt, or if accidental occurrences do of themselves so distract it, the pain can be forgotten. This proves that in some way or other pain is not natural, but is an educated effect of the imagination."

MARY. "But if I stick a pin into a Christian Scientist it will hurt him and he will jump."

JAMES. "No. It might startle him, but if he were sufficiently trained in philosophy it would not hurt.

"I daresay Alec has told you my belief that the material world and its events are realities in our thoughts without having any existence separate from thoughts."

MARY. "Yes, he spoke of it."

JAMES. "Well, one of the strongest helps for me to realize that the world can be only a mental picture or imagination was the discovery that pain, which seems so real and so material, is imagination. I wish I could have put more imagination into my sketch. It has no life. Isn't it time to be going home? Where are Bessy and Bruno?"

Bruno had gone off with Bubbles by motor. The rest of us walked home. When Bessy heard from Mary what James had been telling her, she said, "Upon my word, James, I can't understand you. All these years I thought we knew each other perfectly, and you never told me a word about your system of philosophy."

"Really," he said, "until lately I was rather ashamed of being so fond of philosophy, and all the books are so difficult that I had no idea that its delights could be explained in ordinary language. So I never spoke of it, for fear of being misunderstood. But it is not so hard as I thought, and if I can't put the whole of it into simple words I find I can at least explain

why it is interesting, and how it makes everything in the world satisfactory.”

Then he had to explain again what he calls the first discovery of philosophy, that all we know of the world and of our own body and brains is entirely mental.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THOUGHT-WORLD

IT was at this point that we came to a by-path and were met by Mr. Campbell, the minister, who loved to apply his literary studies to the woods and burns in a solitary ramble. He brightened at sight of us, and astonished Bessy by a quotation from Horace illustrating his escape a few moments before from a rotten tree trunk that fell within a foot of him. "Well, well," he said, "I see you have been to the Queen's View, sketching and howking up roots. You are always at work while I just meander along."

Bessy told him what we had been talking about, and questioned him about the world being nothing more than a mental conception. Thereupon he launched into a rhapsody on the opinions of the ancients, Akhnaton of Egypt,

the Upanishads of the Vedas in India, the untold doctrines of Gautama and the systems of Plato and Aristotle, and finished up with Hume, John Stuart Mill, and other moderns; and assured her that idealism, or looking at the world only as a mental conception, is the key to every advance in philosophic truth in all ages.

Then Evelyn Stuart picked up a stone, and said, "Now look at this stone. It is a real stone, and I know it is there, whether anybody is thinking about it or not."

Mr. Campbell replied, "My dear young lady, God is always thinking of it, and His thoughts are at your disposal. This was the great addition to philosophy that Berkeley announced to the world."

Evelyn said, "I don't quite know what you mean, but what I mean is that I have in my hand a stone that is hard, and rough, and heavy, and it is there without any thinking."

Here James joined in. "Let us make quite sure of that. You have thoughts about a stone and thoughts of your hand in which it

lies ; you have thoughts of feeling weight, and roughness, and coldness, and hardness, and thoughts of a shape like a pyramid, and a brown colour, and of marks like scratches. It is these thoughts that make you say, *here is a stone*. Is that all you know about it ?”

EVELYN. “I can’t think of anything else.”

JAMES. “But it is not all. You add other qualities out of your imagination when you call it a stone. You think you know that it is solid throughout, that it is not a mere shell, that you could break it by a blow, and that the inside would show surfaces like the outside.”

EVELYN. “Yes, I suppose I know all that, just because I know it is a stone.”

JAMES. “So when you say *here is a stone*, you really mean that you have thoughts about a bundle of qualities, and to these you add other thoughts of qualities derived from experience, and then you have a complete mental conception of a stone ; and you have a further thought of the stone, that it will not vanish. First you notice a few sensations, then you recognize the

possibility of other sensations; but it is the permanence in the possibility of these sensations, or of that combination of thoughts about qualities, that give you a belief in the *reality* of the stone."

EVELYN. "I see — ee — ee," she admitted in a hesitating manner, "it is rather wonderful. Only you will have to tell it to me over and over again before I could ever accustom myself to looking at things in that way."

JAMES. "It would not really be difficult were we not in the habit of thinking like our ancestors when they were savages. They saw well enough that the material world exists as a kind of thinking, but they tried to add another kind of existence which has nothing to do with thinking."

BESSY. "Why should they do that?"

JAMES. "Perhaps it was like this. They saw the damage done by rain from the clouds, by waves on the sea, by lava in volcanoes, by lightning in the sky, great powers against which man was powerless. So they gave another

kind of existence independent of mere human thoughts to the clouds and the sea and the volcano and the sky, and called them gods. Then that idea of a separate existence got extended, and when these gods were abandoned, the second material existence of things, apart from their real mental existence, remained.

“Finally, when men began to reason, this second kind of existence was found to make difficulties that could not be got over. But habits of thought are like ruts or grooves that are difficult to get out of; and the habit of thought acquired by these savages has remained with the mass of mankind as a remnant of old superstitions. It is only the cautious philosopher now who refuses to accept the savage’s second kind of existence, and who finds no difficulty at all.”

Then Bessy asked how it came that all of the savage races of the world should have invented the second kind of existence. To this James replied, “I think, Bessy, you will find

that you are wrong. So far as it can be discovered, the second, or material existence of the world was originated, and has been upheld, only by the races that are now included in Western civilization. It appears that most Asiatics have always been quite satisfied with the real mental existence, and have no belief in the material existence apart from thought. So it is with other races that have not been too much influenced by our kind of civilization."

Shortly after this, when James and some of the others were far ahead, Bessy asked the minister whether James, whose whole life had been given to science and engineering, was sound on philosophy.

Mr. Campbell replied, "He has been to the manse a great deal this last week, and in that time has taught me more than I ever learned from books, and has given me the key for understanding some of the most difficult passages in German philosophy. One of their great writers was once asked about the meaning of a passage in his works, and replied,

‘Madame, when I wrote that passage, God and myself alone knew what I meant, now God alone knows.’ Only yesterday Mr. Gordon gave me the key to that very passage and made it quite clear. That same philosopher would have been obliged to exempt Mr. Gordon from his well-known criticism, when he said, ‘There is only one man alive who has understood my works, and he misunderstood them.’ It seems to me that in his youth a revelation was vouchsafed to your cousin. Wisely, he published nothing. He spent his life studying the world with this revelation always before him, and latterly has been comparing his system with all of the best that has been written. That is how I have been impressed with his conversations. I only hope that he will now give it all to the world.”

This eulogium took away our breath. That James, our playmate, the life of a country party, the great traveller, the well-known engineer, should be entitled to such a position in philosophy, seemed incredible but for Mr.

Campbell's well-known learning and sound judgment.

We were now approaching the house, and met Alec and Jack with rods and landing-nets. Bessy shouted at them, "Oh, you miserable men, wasting your time by fishing in the stupid loch, while we have had the most glorious walk; and we have learned all about the great philosophy and are all converts. How many have you caught? and where is Archie?"

Major Malcolm spoke, "He has not come in yet. And we caught nothing. The fact is, that Jack and I did not fish much. We were considering how much we can accept of the philosophy without having our occupation taken from us. But we find that it does not make a particle of difference that way." Then, turning with his usual smile to James Gordon, "Jack and I have had a court-martial on you and your views, and have taken note of the arguments for and against. We admit that all we know of the world is thoughts about our senses of seeing, and feeling, and so on.

We agree that there is no need to suppose that the world has any other kind of existence; for that would only complicate things. We accept it as obvious that if the thoughts of events in the world are made to succeed each other according to law, then your thought-world is just as real, and just the same, as the material kind of world. It is all a matter of definition. That is our judgment.

“Moreover, you show us the possibility of a very reasonable and fascinating heaven, and a very terrible hell, from which in our hearts we hope there may be a means of exit. At the same time we agree thoroughly with Evelyn when she says that you scientific men make us see that everything is different from what it seems to be. There, now, our confession is out. That is all, Jack, isn’t it? It took us a mighty lot of thinking to straighten it all, and we both have lots of questions to ask later.”

When the Major appealed to his brother we looked about, but no Jack was visible. He had got hold of Evelyn to show him the

rockery or the aviary — any excuse to get away. The fact is, he felt a little ashamed of letting her know the interest that he took in James' system. When he found that she, too, was bitten with the same interest he recovered, and, arguing to himself that this proved him to be not quite such an ass as he had feared, he joined her in threshing out their difficulties together.

As they sat down in the rose-garden Jack turned suddenly and said, "I am awfully sorry, Evelyn, but it occurs to me that you can't be anything more than a product of my inner consciousness."

"How funny," she replied, looking critically and in no inappreciative manner at his handsome face; "but I was just thinking that it is very doubtful if you have any real existence."

Then they both had a good laugh, and resolved to lay their dilemma before James Gordon to be cleared up.

I afterwards learned that this same seat in the rose-garden became responsible for many

more interchanges of thought, sometimes on philosophy, sometimes on another subject. The evening was mild, with promise of a lovely sunset. All the others had gone in to tea, but these two were quite content to sit and learn each other's thoughts.

JACK. "I say, Evelyn, it isn't true, is it, that you go in for science and all that?"

EVELYN. "Rubbish! I know nothing at all about it. But I do like to hear these men explain things, and to note their enthusiasm and their ideals, which are so different from ours.

"I was dining with the Johnstones the other day, and met there a most learned man from some university, with a great head as bald as a football; and he told us that two people may be so sympathetic that they can read each other's thoughts at a distance. Is it not wonderful?"

JACK. "What rot! You don't find Peter Ibbetsons except in a romance or at a conjurer's. It is a pretty fairy tale."

EVELYN. "Not a bit. He was quite serious, and had done it himself. They call it telepathy, and the professor said that it is quite established."

JACK. "Well, I shall believe it when I see it. It would certainly be very awkward and would upset the whole of society if everybody could learn to read the thoughts of everybody else."

EVELYN. "But I don't suppose that everybody could learn it; only the finer and less sensuous spirits. Oh, it would be nice. Do let us try and see if we have the power."

JACK. "All right. How shall we begin? You must write to find out from your professor. But I do believe he has been humbugged, and there is nothing in it."

EVELYN. "We will see. I will certainly write to the Johnstones to find out."

Then these two set off and climbed the hill at the back of the house, to see the sun set over the sea and behind the islands.

CHAPTER IX

THE PORTER FAMILY

WE usually get our letters and the newspaper of the previous day just before breakfast. So there is generally at that meal some news about our relations or friends to discuss. To-day Bessy told us that the Porters will motor over to lunch, and every one was pleased. It is an open secret that Bessy has lost her heart to Ida Porter, and much regrets that Bubbles will not be here to see her.

We had a rare joke this morning when Bilson the butler came to Archie with a purse in his hand that he had found in the hall in the breast-pocket of one of Bubbles' great-coats. He said, "It seems to contain money, and I did not think it was fair to the footman, who brushes the coats, to leave it there,

so I took the liberty of removing it for safe keeping."

It contained over thirty pounds in gold and notes, so that Bubbles never lost it, and need not have become indebted to the stranger, and is now wasting his time in London. Alec wanted to telegraph some scathing message, but nothing was done, except that the brats determined to have a good laugh at his expense when he comes back.

We were out on the lawn when the Porters arrived — himself and the two girls. There was no stately and ceremonious receiving of them. Bessy and Ethel almost fell on the necks of the girls with much laughter and rejoicing. Mary, too, welcomed them like quite old friends. Ida Porter and her sister Ella seemed not a bit surprised and quite enchanted with their reception. Archie listened to Mr. Porter's praises of his new motor. He had timed it from Glen Buie, and had brought it up our long steep hill on the top speed. Now, when the chauffeur was about to go to

the stables, he tried to start it by the switch and it refused. When he worked the handle it would not start for some time.

"I suppose it is out of breath and tired," Archie said.

"Yes," put in Ida like a shot; "pneumatic and india-rubber tired."

It was said so pat that none of us could help laughing, and so it went on till lunch time with gay and bright remarks. There was nothing worth repeating, but what they said was often very original.

The girls spoke of Mr. Porter as father, and Bessy said to Ida that she was so glad that they did not use the American word Popper. Ida answered, "I know exactly what you mean. The word must seem funny when you are not accustomed to it. But he is not like a popper to us. He is our real father, and it is quite different. At the same time you must know that although we have English blood we are real thorough-going Americans, even though we may not use some of the common ex-

pressions. You English often think that if we use a word, like cute or cunning or guess or get or rubber, in a way you are not accustomed to, it seems original and to the point. But after such a word has been passed round and been used in that sense by the sixty million inhabitants of the States, Ella and I find that the originality wears off. But please remember that we are Americans to the core, and you English are so sweet that you don't mind our remembering that we beat you at Bunker's Hill, and that George Washington was a great man."

"No, indeed," said Bessy; "we are rather proud of you for that as well as for all the other things in which you have beaten us."

"That is all right," Ida said; "I like people to know how we feel. But, oh! how I wish we had even one old castle and grounds like this. Do let us have a look round. Father is so devoted to his flowers." So then we wandered through part of the gardens.

After lunch, Mr. Porter had a cigar with us

in the smoking-room, and told us a great deal of his history. It appears that as a young man, after coming to England and actually spending a year at Oxford, his health broke down, and he was sent to California. There he took to growing fruit on a huge scale, before it was the fashion to do so and before the Southern Pacific Railway had spread their nets over every struggling farmer. The climate agreed with him. His pursuits fascinated him. He extended his property and invested his savings in land, and in a few years there came such a boom in this kind of property that he was able to sell out, and found himself a very wealthy man while still young.

Then he retired to live near his mother in what was then a small village in Virginia, his father being dead. Here, again, he invested in land, and again his fortune prospered. This had been his wife's home, and their first intimacy was founded on their mutual love of flowers and plants, of which he had made a scientific study, while she devoted herself to

collecting and painting them. "She took so much interest in my studies and experiments that I went on and on, until I found that I was making my discoveries, not for love of the science, but for love of her. I wish she could have come here to-day to make your acquaintance. Every thought or desire she has is beautiful, and in my married life she has given me a new delight in trying to forestall her wishes. We have travelled over half the world in pursuit of new plants to add to her collection of drawings. This has given an interest also to our girls, as it enlarges their acquaintance, and both of them have a taste for history, and have enjoyed being in India and Egypt and Greece. But I think we are all agreed that for a permanent home, to come back to after our travels, time after time, with satisfaction to rest, there is no place like Glen Buie, and we intend to be far more at home in future."

Meantime Bessy and Ethel were taking the girls round the house, to show them

specially the quaint old rooms and staircases, and they were mighty well pleased with everything, and I do not know whether the dungeon or the oak-panelled closet crammed with old china took the palm. They certainly enjoyed it amazingly. But Ida's chief characteristic seemed to be the power of really enjoying the good fortune of others, whether in their possessions or in their dispositions. The brats carried her off alone with them to show her some of their treasures at the offices where they kept their pets, and she was won over by the fine quality of their rabbits as much as their dogs were won over by her fine qualities.

We all had a match at the back of the house in target-shooting with a rook-rifle, and amused ourselves in various ways until it was time for them to leave.

When the Porters went off, we who were left vied with one another in singing the praises of our guests, especially of the eldest girl Ida. Bessy let out to us about her bet with Bruno, and the universal wish was that

she should win the bet. We were all sure that Ida was made for Bubbles, and we finally decided that the girl in mauve at Spa was a designing minx. Archie alone was gloomy. He said, "I know what Bubbles is, and the very fact that we are all so taken with Miss Porter will make him the more Quixotic, and he may feel that honour makes him hold to his first choice. Only I do trust we may find that he has not really gone so far with her as he and Brown seemed to imply. In fact, no man so sensible as Bubbles could possibly fall really in love quite so quickly."

"And yet," Alec said, "if he were to happen to do so with Miss Porter, I do not think we should condemn him."

"I must say I agree with that," Archie said. "Not only are these Porters charming neighbours, but it is very evident, too, that they are well bred." Archie was a great stickler for pedigrees. He admired a thorough-bred horse, a well-bred shorthorn, or even pig; but above all a well-bred man.

CHAPTER X

THE PEKING STORY-TELLER

IN the drawing-room, after dinner on the same day, a conversation was started about the recent attack upon the Embassies at Peking. James told us some most amusing experiences he had there as a young man. All of his travels in out-of-the-way places are a delight to us. He never published any of them, and my worship of him makes it difficult for me to refrain from telling that which I know must be interesting to every one. But I must check my tendency to enlarge upon things that do not lead up to the philosophy, so that your interest, patient reader, may not flag before you have tasted the cream of James' system.

James continued his narrative at that point as follows: "One day, after visiting the

Lamaserie, three miles 'as the crow flies from my lodging, and still inside the Tartar City, I returned along the Ha-ta-men road, and was plodding along in the baking heat and dust a foot deep, looking at all there was to see. There are men who sell you things for a penny or its equivalent, just as on Ludgate Hill. I bought a lighted joss-stick for my cigar. You carry it about, and it lasts half a day. Then I bought some grapes, though it was the month of May, as fresh as if they had just come off the vine. It was then, and may be still for all I know, a mystery how the Chinese preserve their grapes.

“I was very glad of a rest now, when I passed a booth filled with Chinamen sitting round in various attitudes indicating the most profound attention. No one noticed my entrance because they were all so absorbed.

“At the far end of the booth reclined a Chinaman in an elegant blue dress, with a fan in his hand, which moved rhythmically with the cadence of his voice, and had, I imagine, not

a little to do with a hypnotic influence which he had evidently acquired over his hearers.

“He was only a professional story-teller; and I stayed half an hour to watch the faces of the others. These men, mostly of the poorest and most miserable class, were now living in a new world. The daily struggle was forgotten. Whether the story dealt for the moment with love or tragedy, their sympathies were as keen as if they themselves were actors in this new world. The power of the man’s mind and words over them was a revelation to me. They seemed to be literally entranced; and, on leaving, I said to myself: ‘If it be possible for one thinker or spirit to impart his thoughts to others without the need of language, this story-teller seems to represent the manner in which the Creator may be giving to us his thoughts of the world. The world seems to me just as, and no more, real than does the story-teller’s world to these men. We have the same part to play in the general events of the world that these men feel they are playing in the

story-teller's world. The only difference is that to some of us has been given the power, to a limited extent, to direct the acts of a puppet who is one of the characters in the story.'

"Berkeley had this idea, that the Creator puts his thoughts of the universe into our thoughts. But he did not carry out the idea far enough, or he would have overcome the difficulties that troubled his followers. Had he gone a step farther he might have taken his place as almost the greatest of modern philosophers."

When James ended his narrative he was asked many questions, but the remarks that Bessy made cleared up some points. She began by saying she was glad that James' system involved the belief in God. To this he replied, "I fear you may be disappointed. Philosophy needs a creating power, or it may be a continuous creation, but up to the point we have reached it need not necessarily be the God that we Christians believe in. Philosophy has plenty to say on that point later.

We are conscious that we all have access to thoughts that are evolving the events of the universe, and if these thoughts be originated or created by any one thinker or spirit, then creative power is the only quality that our philosophy *so far* has attributed to him."

Then she said, "But I can't quite see why the thoughts of the world may not just grow in my mind."

James said that if each one of us originated our conception of the world, we would not all have the same world to deal with. He added, "Of course it would not be illogical for you to believe that you are the only being with a soul, and that the rest of us are only products of your imagination. But I am sure that you would never accept so unworkable a doctrine. So you prefer, as every philosopher does, without possibility of proof, to believe that other puppets besides your own one are worked by spirits or thinkers like yourself."

Evelyn asked James if he believed in telepathy. He said that he had never himself

known a case of one mind communicating its thoughts to another without signs or language, but other people have had the opposite experience. The communication of world-thoughts from the sources of these thoughts to each of us is, however, what you call telepathy. So far I believe in it. All of these thoughts are available to each of us, but we are so self-centred, and so absorbed in the puppet we control, that we cannot attend to anything that is not sensible to our puppet, and we neglect the knowledge that we might have of other world-thoughts.

Then he added : "These world-thoughts, or this universe-thinking, as I call it, is the continuous process of conceiving, or imagining, or creating the world and its evolution as time goes on ; and all conscious beings like ourselves can be conscious of this universe-thinking. That fact is the key-stone of philosophy."

CHAPTER XI

BABIES

JAMES GORDON was very fond of children, and they of him. He liked to get them to himself, away from the grown-ups, to play with them, and, as he said, to learn from them.

The Malcolms were really paying this visit in consequence of orders from the doctor, and had brought with them the nurse and a baby about a month old. Mary was one of those mothers who really look after their own offspring, and, although she did not bore people, she had a hundred anecdotes of the cleverness and intelligence of her progeny. But one day James took the wind out of her sails by his views on babies.

He said, "Do you really think, Mary, that this baby knows you and loves you?"

MARY. "Not a bit. No baby does at first. They love their milk and their sleep, but Baby here shows no sign when I come near him. It will be different in a week or two. At present he is an idiot, but such a dear one, and, thank goodness, a curable idiot."

JAMES. "I think you do him an injustice. Consider how much he has to find out and to understand when his mind first begins to act upon the things and people in this world."

MARY. "Has he? But I think he might at least show that he knows me."

JAMES. "How is he to show it?"

MARY. "Oh, by smiling, or even by turning his eyes to me and noticing."

JAMES. "But he has not yet learned that a smile has any meaning, and he has not learned — and could not yet have learned, however perfect his mind may be — what muscles he must use to make a smile. As for looking at you and knowing what you are, he may have pictures on the retina of his eye, but he will

have to learn that these pictures mean anything, and he has not yet learned how to move his eyes.

“In these first few weeks of Baby’s life he has to do more thinking and reasoning, and experimenting and guessing, and to accomplish greater intellectual feats, than in all the rest of his life put together. He has sensations, but has not at first any idea what they mean. He has not begun to classify them as sights, sounds, and touchings. He cannot know by instinct that you are a separate thing from the table if his eye has a picture of both. He does not know which is the top and which is the bottom of anything. In fact, the picture on his retina shows you upside-down, and he has to learn by experience that the top of his eye means the bottom of the picture. Besides, his picture is generally all blurred and out of focus. He has not learned to use the focussing muscles of his eyes, nor hardly any other muscles except his swallowing, crying, and kicking muscles. He has not yet had the chance to try them all, and to find out what they can do.

“But his sight is even worse still, for he always sees two pictures of a thing, one with each eye; and the two pictures of anything close to him are different. He has to find out that, by thinking in a certain way, so as to work certain muscles, he can make the two pictures of any one bit of a thing look like one picture, while the farther or nearer ones still look double.

“He has only got flat pictures to look at, and it is a marvel when he teaches himself, by putting a meaning to his feeling and seeing, that some things may be considered farther away than others. It is a discovery equal in intellectual ability to the discovery of the integral calculus.”

MARY. “Oh ! what nonsense you are talking. You are making out every baby to be a prodigy. I cannot understand why he should not see me distinctly as I see him, and recognize me if he sees me a hundred times a day. I don’t need to focus my eyes in order to see him clearly, nor to go through any muscular effort to prevent seeing him double.”

JAMES. "No. You have had so much practice that you do all these things without giving any attention to them. You certainly do them, and you must have learned to do them when you were a baby.

"Baby is now studying the mental thoughts which are different sensations, and classifying them as sights, sounds, tastes, and feelings. Perhaps he has already learned to distinguish a noise from a pinch, or the look of your face from the taste of milk. But it takes time. Then time is itself another thing that he has to know about, that one sensation may be quite different from another and yet in a way be the same sensation. The arm when held up is different from the arm when hanging down, and yet both are the same. In order to explain this, Baby has to invent the idea of time and of movement, of one and the same object of sensation changing the sensation it causes, and he invents the idea of time to distinguish the arm when upright from the arm when hanging down. This must be a most wonderful discovery to him.

"But perhaps the most important of all his intellectual achievements is that, in order that he may give any real meaning to his sensations, he must invent the idea of space in three dimensions — length, breadth, and thickness; for neither sight nor touch tells him anything about distance until he finds that he can explain a number of things by assuming objects to be at different distances.

"Does it not seem marvellous that every baby should evolve the same scheme of three dimensions in space and one in time to enable him to give a meaning to the thoughts that he has about sensations? If he does not make this discovery, we call him an idiot; and it is a wonder how few idiots there are in the world. If he does not evolve this system by sheer intellectual effort, then he must have known all about space and time when he took charge of that baby body."

MARY. "Now you are talking Greek to me. I do not know what you mean by three dimensions. You must tell that to the clever

people, not to me. But I love to hear about all that Baby has to learn before he can be expected to understand what things mean, or before he can know how to do anything, or before he can know what there is to do. Swallowing, kicking, and crying seem to come pretty soon, but I suppose he has to learn what even these mean; unless, as you say, he may have known of them before he was born. I see that even if he knew what a smile means, and that he might some day be able to smile if he wanted to, he would not know what to do to make the smile. How does he ever learn?"

JAMES. "I suppose he goes on thinking in different ways and noticing what happens. He notices that when he thinks in one way one thing happens, and when he thinks in another way another thing happens, and when in a third way nothing happens. So he gradually learns the kind of thinking that we call using our will. He soon found that thinking in one way gave him thoughts of sucking his bottle,

and sometimes this gave him comfortable thoughts of swallowing milk. Thinking in another way made a cry, and he found that when he cried he generally got the chance of sucking and getting milk. Then he found that thinking in other ways made feet or arms kick about, and then something new was sure to happen. So he goes on trying and finding out things.

“After a time he would find that the bottle is separate from the lips that suck. Then he comes upon his great discovery that the throat that cries, the lips that suck, the arms that wave, and the legs that kick are all fastened together, and make up a little body that belongs all to himself, like a doll; and he can work all its parts by thinking in different ways. Isn’t it marvellous how much he has to learn before he reaches the stage of recognizing his mother. His intellectual powers and reasoning faculties at this age must be prodigious. And I confess that, even if Baby’s mind is, as it must be, perfectly clear, and able to under-

stand and reason about anything that comes within his knowledge, even then his task is so gigantic as almost to seem impossible unless he knew all about time and space, and all about the world, before he took charge of the little puppet called Baby."

MARY. "Do you mean you believe that Baby knew all about our world and was thinking things before his little body was born?"

JAMES. "You have reached the only conclusion consistent with reason, based upon experience. Any other conclusion would ascribe to all babies' minds, except those of idiots, such powers as we have no record of in the whole history of the world. That one mind should be able, unassisted, to translate a baby's thoughts about sensations into a connected system, inventing the ideas of three dimensions in space and one in time, is against all our experience. That all minds, excepting the idiots, should do so is more than you can expect a reasoning person to believe."

MARY. "Really, James, you almost frighten

me; but what is the use of bothering with all this?"

JAMES. "Only this, that every one who studies closely what a baby has to find out before it can communicate with us by signs, must agree that the only rational explanation is that our souls are immortal, and that with such other immortals as are not taking a share in working this world we have been watching events in the world, until we have each been allowed to make use of one of the puppets and to make it act upon the material world, and to play a part in it for good or ill; and after the first month or two our interest in the puppet becomes so absorbing as to blur, and make us forget, all the rest of what we knew before we took charge of the puppet, all the universal knowledge of the thought-world, excepting the things that affect our puppet."

MARY. "What a funny idea."

JAMES. "Yes, but it is the only rational idea; and its great use is that by teaching us that our souls are immortal before birth, it

explains death, and teaches us that our thinking powers go on even after they have no puppet to look after; that is to say, after the puppet is dead and cannot be worked. Our attention is then no longer absorbed in our puppet, and we meet our friends with joy or sorrow according to the use we have made of the puppet during the time when we had some control, like the Creator has, over the universal vision of this world."

MARY. "It is good of you to explain all this to me. It certainly seems a wonderful and beautiful philosophy if it is all true. It is like music and flowers."

Mary joined us in the saloon and told us about the wonderful things a baby has to think about, and how it is impossible that all babies should evolve the same world from their sensations unless they are furnished with the key by knowing about space and time and the world. She put the case in ordinary drawing-room words, but Mr. Campbell, who was calling, assured her that what she had said would

make an admirable commentary on one of the obscure points of difference between two of the greatest German philosophers.

Later on she was heard talking to Nurse, and saying: "I want you to be very careful not to disturb Baby when you see that he is thinking. He has a great deal to do just now in classifying his sensations, and is engaged upon a discovery equal in intellectual difficulty to the discovery of the integral calculus. In fact, Nurse, he is now engaged upon the greatest intellectual feat of his life, and if he does not find out the answer he will be an idiot for the rest of his life. So please see that he is not disturbed." Nurse was awestruck, but James came up and said he thought that Baby might look upon interruptions as helps, by giving him more experiences upon which to found his theories. "And remember," he added, "we have agreed to accept the philosophy which tells that Baby knew all about the world long ago."

We had great fun over it all, and from that

time Baby went by the name of the philosopher. Mary was a universal favourite; not only was she beautiful to look at, and her actions graceful, but she dressed with exquisite taste, and her voice and laughter sent sunshine and music through the house, and her every thought was of kindness to others and happiness in herself. From this time she seemed to dote on her baby more than ever, and it did not bore us, it was all so uncommonly lovely.

Ethel, who is the poetical member of our party, ran to her room to fetch a book. Coming back she told James that now she could understand Swinburne's "Birth-Song to the Baby, Olivia Rossetti." She read it to us :

Now, ere they sense forget
The heaven that fills it yet,
Now, sleeping or awake,
If thou couldst tell, or we
Ask and be heard of thee,
For love's undying sake,
From thy dumb lips divine and bright mute speech
Such news might touch our ear
That then would burn to hear
Too high a message now for man's to reach.

CHAPTER XII

THE WILL, BRAINS, AND TOE-WAGGING

JACK and Evelyn (the brats called them Jack and Jill) were in the rose-garden, talking about their proposed experiments. "How nice it would be if we could really talk to each other when in different places, no matter how far apart. I feel sure that we should have a better chance if we went in for the simple life, living on rice and lentils. Suppose we try." It was Evelyn who said this. Then Jack told her that he had been awake in the night, and had tried very hard to will her to get up early and go for a walk with him before breakfast, but he had failed. Then they discussed James's idea that we — that is, our spirits or thinking powers — have always been living and looking on at the thoughts of the world until we were given

puppets to let us take a hand in the game. Jack said, "I suppose James sees a way out of my difficulty, but I cannot understand why I should forget all that I knew before I took charge of the puppet."

At this moment James and I passed them, and Jack called out, "Look here, James, what happened to my soul or spirit when I came to play a part in the game of life to change it and make it forget things? Is it the same soul? or has somebody hypnotized it, or what? And do you mean the same thing by soul, and mind, and spirit, and thinking-power?"

James answered, "I look upon them all as being the same. Your Self, or Ego, or your spirit, or mind, or soul, is simply your power of having thoughts, and so also is your will and every faculty of your mind. One soul differs from another in its choice of likes and dislikes and preferences. That gives to a soul its individuality.

"You have not changed a bit in your powers of thinking and knowing since you

took charge of your puppet. But now you do not choose to pay attention to some things. You got so tremendously excited with having a puppet whom you could make to do things that you don't care to think of anything else. When a man first finds that he can work a bicycle, or better, an aeroplane, do you not think that, while he is working the machinery and noting the effect of air-currents and whirls upon his aeroplane, he would not pay much attention to other things that he knows — about shooting, or fishing, or astronomy, or dancing? Would not he retain, about these, only what you might call a sub-conscious knowledge? Would not the new experiences and the new power given to him absorb his whole attention?

“Would not this be the case still more when a man passes from the state of merely contemplating a world of puppets to learning to work a puppet with its complicated machinery, and so to influence the whole world of puppets? Would not his thoughts become

dominated by the actions of the world upon his puppet (what he calls its sensations), and by the things that he can make it do and the influence that he can make it exert?"

To this Evelyn raised objection, saying, "Surely, if I were very anxious to attend to what you call my subconscious knowledge of Jack's thoughts, and shut my eyes, and had no vivid sensations, I ought to be able to prevent withdrawing my attention from what I want to attend to."

James said, "I believe you are right. The difficulty is to get rid of sensations, and they are always with us in the operations of breathing, blood-circulation, and digestion. But your organs of sense do not work when your puppet is dead, or when it is under anæsthetics or overtired. In all these cases of permanent or of profound temporary sleep, it is the opinion of some philosophers — and I agree — that, having no sensations to distract your thoughts, you may be in contact with the universal thoughts of the world, just as you

were before you were born. But the moment that active vitality returns to your puppet the sensations recall your power of using the puppet, and your keenness to enjoy the use of that power makes you think of nothing else.

“Many people, after an anæsthetic, have exclaimed, ‘What wonderful things I have seen and learned ; I wish I could write them down before I forget them.’ Do you see what I mean ?”

“No, I don’t. I cannot see why the puppet’s sensations should make me forget what I was thinking of a minute before.”

James said, “I cannot find you an example among this world’s experiences with a sufficient contrast, although you have doubtless noticed the rapidity with which a dream vanishes on awaking. But suppose that you were enjoying a thrilling play at the theatre, or a divine piece of music at the opera, when the cry of ‘Fire’ was raised. On the moment you would be up and doing, either trying to calm the others,

or else joining in the stampede. Your interest and even excitement would be intense, would it not? And what attention could you then give to the memory of what entranced your thoughts only a minute before."

"Yes," she said, "I see better now what you mean."

James went on: "You have raised a very important question, so let me give you one more illustration, remembering always that illustrations are not arguments. I was travelling in Siberia long before a railway in those parts was possible. I posted in a carriage I had bought, called a tarantass, without springs. You lie full length on the top of your baggage. At times when I knew that there was a bad bit of road ahead, I engaged sometimes as many as seven horses. They were harnessed all abreast. The right number is only three, and for these proper attachments are provided on the tarantass. The traces of the other horses were fastened to the steps and other projections. The worst bits of road

are like corduroy roads in America, where ditches a foot or two deep have been worn across the road, at intervals of a yard or two, for several hundred yards. When the driver (who is called a yemshick) approached one of these bad bits of road he gathered his reins together, cracked his whip, and shouted at his horses like this: 'Nu poshol, golupka moyá, smatritye na doroga, skajitye dushenka, poshol durak,' — and lashed them into a gallop over the sea of ditches. As for me — in a long journey like that you have to occupy your thoughts with some problem, or some romance, or some invention — I would be thinking of such a thing when the shocks of the furious gallop threw me and my baggage up into the air like shuttlecocks. When it was over, I would try to resume the train of thoughts that I had a few minutes before, but in no case was I ever able to do so; the overwhelming attention given to my sensation of being a shuttlecock took my thoughts from the old channel, and I could not bring them back.

"Now I say that when you are born, or when you awake from unconsciousness (if your thoughts have been in the universal, and quite detached from your puppet), your sensations then act like the shocks of my tarantass."

Evelyn said she could now understand better what James meant, but he must tell her a lot more. "I don't understand about my soul, or mind, or power of having thoughts. Is it made up of different parts to do all the different things like arguing, willing, imagining, and so on? and also where is it? in the heart or brain or where?"

James said, "Certainly, Evelyn, you go to the root of the matter. But if there be nothing existing except thoughts, there is no space, and the soul has no place. There is not a thing or machine called mind or spirit. When a philosopher defines a man's real Self as an Ego, or as a mind or soul or spirit who thinks thoughts, it is very difficult for us not to picture that Self as a kind of machine that does the thinking. Of course this is wrong.

I never like to think of my real Self as a mind or spirit, for that sounds to me like an attenuated kind of fine matter. I try to think of my real Self as a process of thinking, or a power of thinking; and I use the word *thinking* to include everything that can be done by the soul, mind, or spirit, from reasoning and imagining to willing and perceiving, from loving and hating to remembering and desiring.

“It is natural for us to have the idea that when you exert your will you are using a different part of your mind from that which you use in reasoning or remembering or imagining. This is all wrong. I have proved by an experiment that they are really all the same kind of thinking. When you exert your will to do a thing, it is not the clenching of your teeth and the frown on your brow that works the muscles. It is a quiet kind of thinking, more like listening to a sound. You do not notice this when using muscles that you are accustomed to use.

“I learned all this in my bath by trying to

lift the second toe of my right foot without moving the others. I had to train these muscles to obey my will. It took me a week to learn how to do it, and all the time I was noticing the kind of thinking that I used. It was not in the least like a violent teeth-clenching, frowning thought. It was a funny kind of thinking. I cannot find words to describe it. It was very like remembering a name, or listening to a very faint sound; and all the while I was watching to see what happened to the toe. At first the wrong thing always happened, and I saw lots of toes moving any way. Then I tried to think a little differently, and something else happened to the toes. So I went on trying and watching. If a change in my kind of thinking worked better, I tried to think nearly in the same way but a little differently. In a week I was able to do what I wanted. I cannot describe it any better. Do try the experiment yourself, and you will be surprised to find out what kind of thought is meant by exerting your will."

"All right," Evelyn answered; "to-morrow I will take my first lesson in toe-wagging."

[E] James continued: "I suppose that I was thinking all the time of the brain-cells that are connected by nerves to the toe-muscles. Afterwards I found that I was doing just the same kind of thinking when I tried to remember anything, or to fix a new word in my mental vocabulary, or to do a sum in mental arithmetic, or to argue a thing, or to imagine a scene or picture.

"This was a great discovery to me, because it proves that all these kinds of thought are associated in my mind with thoughts of brain-cells that work the toe-muscles and all my other muscles. If this be true it throws light on many things, and gets over one of the difficulties that people have in accepting our theory of the world (or *idealism* as it is called), because it leads us to find a use for the brain-cells as tools to help our memory by the association of ideas. It now seems to be certain that we use our thoughts of what each brain cell can

do as letters in the alphabet of a language which we learn to reason with so soon as we, on being born, confine our attention to our puppets."

Jack said, "Is not that a tremendously big subject, James, a whole philosophy in itself for explaining memory, understanding, and reasoning?"

James said, "You are right. It took me years before I was sure of it; and it is true. At first I thought the idea was original, but I have since learned that it has been already developed by others. I am not going to bore you with it now, but some day I would like to tell you more."

After this, bath time was a festive occasion for the men, who invaded one another's rooms to show off their progress in toe-wagging. Most of us succeeded in time, and all agreed that willing and remembering and perceiving and understanding are all the same kind of thinking, and must be associated with brain-cells, just as will is.

CHAPTER XIII

CHIEFLY ABOUT BUBBLES

BESSY said that she was anxious to see some of the new plants that Mr. Porter told her about, invented by himself. She said, "He has some new tulips, worth a fabulous sum, and he promised to show me how he had learned in California to produce oranges without pips and grapes without seeds."

We were at breakfast, and Evelyn, at that moment in difficulties, said, "I wish you would tell him to invent a herring without bones."

After lunch, Bessy carried me off to Glen Buie. She went the rounds with Mr. Porter, while I joined the girls at lawn-tennis. I must say that they improved steadily on acquaintance; I felt that Bubbles would be a lucky fellow should he fall in with his mother's wishes. It is hard to see how he could resist

Ida if once he met her. She really seems to be made for him.

After tea, Bessy had a long talk with Mrs. Porter; and on our way home in the motor she told me that she had opened the subject of Bubbles and Ida. So like her, always going straight to the point. Mrs. Porter was delighted with the idea, but says that for the present it must be postponed. Ida has never cared much for any of the men who have paid attentions to her, but quite lately they have a suspicion that she has completely lost her heart. Mrs. Porter would not say much, and only asked Bessy not to consider the matter for the present.

I expressed my opinion to Bessy that if she wanted anything badly I had noticed generally that the matter was practically settled.

Bruno arrived from London, and told us how Bubbles had fussed around, trying to find out who had lent him the fiver. "On reaching Euston he tried to find out about the travellers who had engaged sleepers on the night he

went North, but found it best to put off enquiries to a later hour. Then he looked up old Johnstone at breakfast, and got from him a letter to some big man at Scotland Yard. He called there and asked for a detective, and a clever man, Boyce, was recommended, who questioned him about the purse and about his movements up to the time when he took his ticket. Bubbles was getting quite impatient, until at last Boyce laid down his notes, and said, 'You want me to help you to find the purse?' 'Of course I do; that is why I am here.' Boyce asked if he cared to know the conclusion at which he had arrived. Bubbles replied, 'Yes, of course.' Boyce then said, 'You must not be surprised, but I do not think you have been robbed at all. You will find your purse in the breast-pocket of the great-coat you left in the hall at home.'"

Bruno was going on to tell us how furious Bubbles was at being told such nonsense, when he was interrupted by exclamations of surprise from all of us, and by yells from the brats;

and when he heard of Bilson's discovery he was fairly taken aback. "How could Boyce have known?" we all exclaimed.

Archie alone did not look upon it as magic, and said, "These detective people have an enormous experience. I expect that they often find people who think that they have been robbed when they have mislaid something. Also they know the habits of station pick-pockets, and most likely Boyce decided from what he was told that these gentry had no opportunity to work their usual plans. If Bubbles told him, as he told us, that he always puts his purse in the breast-pocket of his morning coat, that he seldom wears an overcoat, but was doing so in the station, it was natural to suppose that he might have put the purse in the wrong pocket."

Bruno said that these were just the kind of questions Boyce asked. "I daresay he found it a simple deduction, but it does look like magic to us common people. Well, after that Bubbles went on to give Boyce his clues about

the lender of the five pounds, and was given an assurance that before long he would be discovered. I have not seen him since."

Next day Bessy had a letter from Bubbles, and was much surprised to find that it came from Spa.

DEAREST AND BEST MOTHER — I am too miserable for words. I felt that I ought to do what I could to look for my dear wife that is to be — for, impossible as it seems, I am sure that she loves me as truly as I love her. Everything has gone wrong. I came here so full of confidence, and I have been unable to find out anything. At the Casino people were most polite, and did all they could to help me. They put before me the list of names to look through. There seems to be no doubt that the two girls whose names I want are not among the entries of the time when Bruno and I were here. The Secretary assures me that they could not have used the rooms without their tickets, and that they must have become members at some earlier time in the year. With the meagre information that I could give it was hopeless to find the names when we did not know the date. I had to give it up, but not until I had interviewed nearly every official and attendant.

Then I went to the hotel. I told the porter what I wanted, and he said, "Certainly; if Monsieur will

seat himself a few minutes I will find out." Then he brought the Manager, and I explained to him. Then the head waiter was called. At last it appeared that the girls did not stay at the hotel but only came there for their meals. Oh, Mother! it took my breath away. It was the second string to my bow, my last hope. I shall pull through all right, but at present I am very, very low. How I do long to be with her; you can't imagine what it is. I cannot come back to-day, because I intend to go to every single place where we were together, and shall try to recall every word she uttered, and every look she gave me.

At the bottom of my heart I cannot believe that my life is ended, and that is what it would mean if she were really lost to me. Forgive me, dearest Mother, for burdening you with all my woes, and for using you as a safety valve, to let off steam, but if there is one thing that would comfort me it is to be with you, and you may expect me in two or three days. I do not give up hope, and in any case I shall not let the others see how much I feel it. You might write a line to the Club.

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When at last he arrived at home it was rather a pathetic Bubbles, but he tried not to show it. After a long talk with his mother, he romped with the brats, went out for a gallop on the sands with Ethel, thinned a plantation with his

father, strummed the piano with Evelyn, and played billiards with Alec.

Then he came to me in the smoking-room to let off steam, and he made me feel so queer that I had to go to Bessy to tell her that I must join the opposite camp, and that I hoped with all my heart he might find and marry the girl in mauve. To my surprise, I found her of the same mind. Her interview with Bubbles had quite upset her, and her one hope was to find the girl in mauve.

Later on, Bubbles asked what had become of his dream theory, and Jack replied, "We seem to have travelled a long way since you left. First, we are all agreed that we have the knowledge of a mentally existing world, a real, permanent, material thought-world, and we have no knowledge of, nor need for, any other kind of existence for the world.

"Second, as we all have thoughts of the same world, each of us must get these thoughts from the same source, which may be a dominant thinking-power.

“Third, the intelligence shown by babies when interpreting their sensations so as to mean this world, and the fact that they all arrive at the same scheme of a world, prove that they have known all about the world before they were born, and have had a continuous existence, and will naturally go on existing continuously.

“Fourth, and I think this is the most wonderful: as I have said, we knew everything in the world before we were born, but when we took charge of a baby-puppet, we got so absorbed in the new power of doing things that we paid no attention to our universal knowledge. Most of that remains only as sub-conscious knowledge, and we attend merely to those parts of it that affect our puppet.”

Bubbles said, “You have got far beyond what we argued at Chi fu, and I shall have to hear more particulars from James, especially how it is that my universal knowledge got cramped, and cut down, merely by being given charge of one of the puppets.”

James said, "Don't bother about that now. Think it out when you go to bed. You will find that it soon gets clear enough."

Alec told him, "You have only to realize that a baby spends its time in bringing its great mind down to our level, and in learning to look at the world like the rest of us, from a self-centred point of view."

Bubbles took James away quietly, and asked him how his philosophy had ever helped him in a great trouble. James replied, "The most difficult troubles to meet have always been about other people's suffering when I seemed to be helpless. But in those cases I generally found that I was seeking trouble before it came. When a calamity has fallen upon myself, I have invariably found that in the end there came compensations so wonderfully complete as to make the calamity a blessing in disguise. During my life I have noticed that the greater the calamity the more splendid were these compensations. This knowledge prevents one from suffering the dread of the unknown."

When a knock-down blow hits me, I have come to look at it as a grand opportunity to prove my grit. I have a great friend who always feeds with me, sleeps with me, and joins me in work or play, and his name is James Gordon; and I care more for his good opinion of me than for anything; and in a way I enjoy a stroke of bad luck just to show my friend that I have the pluck to face it. My philosophy led me to that, to aim at 'acquiring merit'; it would take too long to explain it all, and I daresay it seems foolishness to you. But during my roughest travelling I have always had a pleasure in meeting hardship, because it taught me how much I could bear physically. Philosophy has taught me to have the same pleasure in conquering a mental pain."

In spite of all the efforts of Bubbles to hide from others his great depression, it was still perceptible to some of us; and that young imp Madge, when she noticed it, racked her little brains to think what she could do to make him

laugh, and be his merry self again. Even Bubbles' state of dejection could not withstand the last phase of her scheming.

We noticed that all of one morning some deep plot was being hatched by the brats. Chips and Madge went round collecting all the monthly magazines that they could find. Then they hunted up Bunny and carried him off to the schoolroom.

The explanation came at lunch time. Madge having finished her plate looked up rather timidly at her father, and said, "Father, will you lend me twenty pounds? I promise to pay it back in a month and a half with interest."

ARCHIE. "What *do* you mean, Madge? What has been turning your head?"

MADGE. "It is not nonsense. I mean it; for I can make a hundred pounds with it."

ARCHIE. "What would you do with the twenty pounds?"

MADGE. "Advertise, just like they all do in the magazines."

ARCHIE. "What an idea. You are off your head. You don't know anything about these things."

MADGE. "Oh, yes, I do. It is quite all right. We have written out the advertisement, and we can't make less than a hundred pounds."

ARCHIE. "Let us see it, and we will judge if you can make a hundred pounds. If the votes are in your favour, I will advance the twenty pounds; oh, yes, no fear."

Thereupon Madge fumbled in her pocket, and produced therefrom a crumpled sheet of paper in bold writing and capitals, which is here copied out:

APPETITES TO BE SOLD, 2/6 EACH.

ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM LOSS OF APPETITE
AND THE EVILS THAT COME WITH IT ?

THE BEST KIND OF APPETITE ONLY 2/6.

HAVE YOU FELT THAT TIRED FEELING, AND
THE DISLIKE FOR WORK OF ANY KIND, AND NO
APPETITE ?

WE GIVE YOU A PERFECT CURE FOR LOSS OF
APPETITE, AND REFUND THE MONEY IF OUR
PRESCRIPTION IS FOLLOWED AND NO CURE
EFFECTED. AN A 1 APPETITE FOR 2/6 WITH
ALL INSTRUCTIONS.

WE ARE NOT QUACKS. WE WISH TO BENEFIT
HUMANITY. LET YOUR DOCTOR TRY OUR CURE
ON ONE BAD CASE. HE WILL CONFESS OUR DIS-
COVERY IS A SUCCESS. EVERY LEADING MEDI-
CAL MAN IN LONDON ENDORSES OUR CLAIM.

LOSS OF APPETITE CURED FOR 2/6.

NO CURE NO PAY.

CURE IN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

THE MOST OBSTINATE CASE HAS YIELDED TO
OUR TREATMENT IN THREE DAYS.

ENCLOSE 2/6 AND ONE PENNY FOR POSTAGE
TO MESSRS. BUNCHIPMADGE, M.S.L.A.
KNOCK CASTLE, DRUMPOURIE.

APPETITES 2/6 EACH, OR FIVE FOR 10/.
ASK FOR OUR APPETITE AND SEE THAT YOU
GET IT.

We all shrieked with laughter. It was really not bad. A hundred questions were shouted at the criminals. The gist of them all was: "Suppose you got answers with money enclosed, you could not do what you say, and you would be sent to prison for cheating."

Madge said quite calmly, "No fear. We have our prescriptions all ready, and the cure will never fail."

Archie said, "Don't be foolish, Madge; got your prescription indeed! Is that it? Let me see."

Then another small crumpled paper came from Madge's pocket and was passed round. It contained nothing but the words DON'T EAT.

You never heard such a row at the table of a well-conducted family. Bunny lay back guffawing at us all. Alec and Mary nearly fell off their chairs with laughter. Archie took Madge on his knee and gently pulled her ears. Then Chips, supported by Bunny, called out, "Vote, vote. Those in favour, hands up.

Those against — none. Carried unanimously. Father, where is the twenty pounds? Madge, you are a brick."

But the twenty pounds was compounded for, and the advertisement was not sent.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CRICKET MATCH

WE have had a week of unusual excitement and could think of nothing but cricket. It all came upon us suddenly. Archie had news that a cousin of his was with an Oxford reading party at Strathbrora, a village about ten miles off. So he took Alec and Jack with him to go and call.

It appeared that the Oxonians really did a certain amount of reading, but they had excited quite an interest among the inhabitants in their afternoon amusements. The chief one was playing cricket, and they taught the game to the natives, some of whom turned out apt pupils.

Our party arrived during one of these games. They were quite ready to stop the play and welcome the visitors. In a few minutes every

one knew every one else, and there were several of the strangers whose people were known to some of our party.

Archie asked them to go on with their cricket, and they got Jack to take a bat, and he put new life into the game. When it was time to go, they invited us to come over any day. But it was Jack who made the suggestion that they should challenge the county, which was received with acclamation, and he undertook to do his best to get an eleven together.

From that day on we have been practising continually. Even the ladies joined in, and we brought in some keepers and young gardeners in case they might be wanted. The next day Archie and Jack motored round to look for recruits. They got two new men and then went on to Glen Buie, hoping that some of the Porters' friends might join us. But they had a sad meeting. All the visitors had left and the house was very quiet and sad, the truth being that poor Ida has been really ill. She was up and dressed, but Archie said he

was horrified at the change, so white and fragile. They said that she starts at every sound, awaits every post eagerly, and is lying down most of the day. Archie said there was an expression on her face that made him think of the angels. They wanted to think of some change that would do her good, and Archie got them to promise to come to the cricket match if Ida should be strong enough.

During the whole of this week we were practising from morning to night, and if it had not been that we were always thinking of poor Bubbles and his anxieties we should have enjoyed it much more. We kept up his interest about the lender of the five pounds, and made him write to Boyce to learn if he had found any clue. There is no doubt that the cricket excitement coming on the top of James's advice helped to pull him through.

At last the great day came, and we all went off in motors and carriages, while a lot of the servants and people of the estate were sent on in carts. The opposing eleven received us

with enthusiasm. Some of them had run over during the week to see us, and we were like old friends. It was a lovely spot, a field on the banks of the Brora where it reaches the sea in a long bay with granite rocks on both sides, a ruined castle on one of the headlands, and several islands beyond its mouth.

Our side went in first. Jack was in great form, and seemed to play with the bowlers, glancing the balls in the most unexpected manner, or slogging them in the one direction where there was no fielder. The brats had taken to nickname him Ranji, and he was living up to the name.

James had asked to be put in late, and spent his time with the ladies, praising and criticising the play. He admired Jack's play amazingly, and looked at it, as he did at most things, from a new point of view.

He said, "I wonder of how many things a man can think at the same time. Just consider the number of things that Jack has to think of, from the moment that the ball leaves

the bowler's hand until he has played it. First, he has to interpret all his sensations in the light of past experience, going over a multitude of reasonings and deductions as to the distance and speed of the ball. We are so accustomed to doing this that we think nothing of it, but when you come to think of it, a tremendous lot of sub-conscious thinking is involved. After that he uses his memory of other balls he has had bowled to him in nearly the same way. From these memories he has to judge the direction and speed of the ball, and by some occult process of reasoning, to make up his mind how long it will be before the ball touches the ground, at what distance from the wicket, and whether it will be straight or will break, what it is likely to do after it strikes the ground, and how long it will be before it reaches the place where he must hit it.

“Then he has to imagine all the possible ways in which he might hit the ball, and to imagine the result of each way of acting as judged by the memory of past experiences.

He must also remember the position of the fields and the qualities of the different fielders and the probable effect of a hit in each different direction.

"Next, he must select from all of these a course of action that his arguments tell him is the wisest under all these conditions.

"After that, he calculates the fraction of time that must elapse before the bat is to hit the ball, and must exert his will, as we say, and wish a number of his muscles, in his arms, wrists, fingers, and legs, to act sometimes in succession, sometimes many together, so as to make the bat hit the ball in the direction, and at the time, and with the force selected by him.

"I suppose if you were to count them up you would find that Jack goes through at least five thousand mental acts in that moment of time. And remember, too, that if the ball breaks in an unexpected manner, he has to go over all his thinking again in the hundredth part of a second.

"Wellington once said that the great French

generals were as good at fighting a battle as he, but when he won, it was generally by being able to change his plans in a moment when the ball did not break as expected."

"No wonder," Mr. Campbell said, "that Wellington could say that our battles are won on the playing-fields of Eton."

"Good heavens, you frighten me," Evelyn exclaimed. "I never knew that Jack was so clever. And yet that learned old Don who is umpire could not do it."

"I don't think he could," James answered. "It needs a fresh clear mind, not spoilt by reasoning in one groove."

Evelyn said, "From what you say I can see no limit at all. Do you mean to tell me that a fresh clear mind could go still farther and think of millions of things all at once?"

James said, "I believe you are right, and there is simply no limit to what the mind can think of were it not spoilt by reasoning. The Don could not, because his thinking is all bound in one volume. If you begin to watch in other

matters what you have noted in Jack's case you will agree with me. Watch a pianist playing and imagine the number of different instructions that he must give to his wrists, fingers, and arms; or watch a man crossing a London street and think of all the things that he must have in his mind. You will notice that often the profoundest reasoner is not the quickest to grasp the meaning of a situation, or to stop a runaway horse. But when we pass to a fresh clear mind like Jack's we appreciate its much greater power, when the horse bolts, to see things, and understand their meaning, to remember past experiences, to draw conclusions, to predict the future and imagine contingencies under various conditions, to select a course of action, and to give the infinite number of orders to the muscles of its puppet which we include in the word action."

"And you say that all this kind of instinct is lost by the Don when he takes to reasoning too much," Evelyn asked.

"Yes, and this gives us an insight into the

infinite capabilities of our minds before we began to take charge of a puppet. As the Don's mind is to Jack's, so is Jack's mind to ours before we were born. The mind of a woman who has not been over-educated approaches that of a clear fresh mind. I often think that the woman's instinct, about the existence of which we cannot have a doubt, is part of her knowledge of world-thoughts which she would lose if she spent her life in reasoning. It is much like those freaks known as calculating boys, who can multiply six figures by six figures, not in the way we multiply, but by a sort of instinct."

While James and Evelyn had been talking about Jack's powers, the subject of this discussion was playing in great form, and the air was filled with the applause of the spectators. The conversation was now interrupted by cheers and the violent clapping of hands, as the captain of the Oxonians with a jump in the air reached the ball with one hand and caught a hard drive from one of our best recruits.

There were calls for James, who hurried to the wicket. He played very freely, and soon got a score of eighteen, when he was bowled clean, and then it was time for lunch. Score, 136 for 8 wickets.

Each party had brought their own lunch, but it was arranged to combine the joint contributions, so table-cloths were laid on a grassy knoll beside the wood on the edge of a burn, and a four-wheeled dog-cart served as sideboard for bottles and plates. There was bright sunshine, and all were in high spirits, and the various incidents of the game afforded plenty of matter for conversation. So the lunch passed off cheerily, and Bessy and Ethel went off soon to return with trays of delicious coffee, and this being unexpected was all the more appreciated.

But little time was given up to smoking, and the match was resumed. Jack was still in with one of our neighbours, who played cautiously so as to give Jack a good chance of a century. We all sat near the scoring table,

but poor old Bubbles, who had been as full of fun as the rest, seemed to find the effort too much, and retired to obscurity behind the dog-cart.

Bessy had received a line from Mrs. Porter saying that Ida was rather better, and they hoped to be with us in the afternoon. And, sure enough, we now saw the Glen Buie motor coming down the glen. There was a general move, and we walked off to welcome the party. They dismounted and came towards us, Mr. Porter with a joke about his cricketing skill, Mrs. Porter with her comfortable smile of welcome, Ella bright and laughing in a summery light dress, and then between them came Ida. I thought I had never seen anything in the world so full of beauty. She was pale but had not lost all colour, her deep red lips just parted to show her pearly teeth, her cheeks still rounded, with a touch of colour as she smiled on meeting us, — and those great eyes, were they violet? — under the dark lashes they seemed to be looking for something wist-

fully, and her expression appeared to be so ethereal as to lift her above the sphere of human mortals. She was dressed in a delicate fabric of mauve, with a thin flimsy mantle of the same tint enveloping her from head to foot.

Introductions followed and we walked on. As we passed the dog-cart Bubbles rose and came towards us. Then the most wonderful thing happened. Advancing with an alert step he came suddenly face to face with Ida Porter. He stood stock still and looked again. "Mabelle, my darl ——" he exclaimed, and checked himself. As she gazed, a bright happy gleam glanced from her eyes, and she could only ejaculate, "Oh, Bubbles!" and her eyes devoured him. There was dead silence for five seconds or five minutes — I do not know how long. Each of the Porter party with an incredulous happy air said, "Bubbles!" and each one of our party said to his or her neighbour, "The girl in mauve!" There seemed to be a gasp in every throat, an unshed tear in

every eye. Bubbles took the trembling hand in his and stroked it so softly.

BUBBLES. "There has been some misunderstanding, I am sure. Why did you run away from Spa without writing me a word?"

IDA. "Did you not get the letter I sent to your hotel addressed to the care of Dr. Brown, whose name alone I knew?"

BUBBLES. "You wrote. Oh! thank heavens. No, we left Spa the same morning as you did."

IDA. "Oh, Bubbles!"

He still held her hand. Then saying, "They tell me that you have been ill. Come, dear, and sit down with me; they will excuse us, I know, because we have so much to say to each other." He led her to a shady spot and they listened to each other's tales.

Only then did any of us move. We had been spellbound by the intenseness of our feelings. There was a rush of happiness and sympathy running through our veins. Bessy

turned to Mrs. Porter and fell on her with kisses, and they shed real tears of relief upon each other's necks. Congratulations were exchanged on all hands. It was Bunny who brought us back to the realities of life by his exclamation, "I say, Bruno, who wins the bet, you or mother?"

I fear that the end of our innings had little interest for us. At last it was all over, all out 196, and Jack carried his bat with 110 runs. As he left the wicket a cheer went up from the villagers and people, but from ourselves there was no cry to him, except of the wonderful news that Ida and the girl in mauve were one and the same, and there was no one that was made more happy by the news than he.

Mr. Forter turned to Bessy and said, "What a handsome young man Lord Fintrae is. We have not met before, and yet his face looked familiar to me. How unfortunate it was that we never happened to know that you called him Bubbles. It was the only name that Ida knew. But all is well that ends well."

Then Bubbles led the girl in mauve up to Mr. Porter, and said, "I believe you know, without a word from me, the request that we have to make to you. We want your consent and we know that you will give it, for I love her with all my heart, and she loves me, and there is nothing else in the world." Then all the parents gave their blessing, and happiness reigned everywhere.

This matter was hardly over when the head-keeper's boy arrived on a pony with a telegram from Boyce. It ran thus :

The gentleman at Euston station is called Porter of Glen Buie, near you. — Boyce.

Here was a new development. Bubbles ran up to Mr. Porter and apologized for not having recognized him. Mr. Porter said, "I was sure that I had seen you before, but could not place you." Then there were long explanations about the illegible address and the steps that had been taken to find the name of the friend in need. Alec asked Mr. Porter what steps he had been taking to discover the

fraudulent borrower, and added, "I cannot imagine how you could be so confiding with a man whose face is so unprepossessing."

"It is a very charming face," he replied, "and do you not understand that perhaps I was thinking how nice it would be to do a kindness to so good-looking a chap in case he might ever wish to be my son-in-law, as I have no son of my own."

"Well, let it stay at that," Alec said, and we all discussed the events of the past fortnight.

The Oxonians were rather out of it during these developments, so we had to settle down to the game again, and our side was in such good form that the fielding was wonderful, and Bubbles bowled with such demoniacal precision that no one could stand against him. He got six wickets and they were all out for 76. So we won by 120 runs.

The Porters carried off Ida so soon as Bubbles would let them, and he was invited to come and spend the next day at Glen Buie. He did not need much asking.

The news had spread among the villagers, and Ida's departure, and later that of Bubbles, took place to the music of the bagpipes and ringing cheers from men, women, and children.

CHAPTER XV

A NEW VERSION OF PARADISE LOST

BESSY and Bubbles spent a night at Glen Buie, and brought back with them Ida and her mother, such a radiant, bright, singing, laughing Ida, so full of contentment, following with her eyes, full of admiration and love, every change of expression on the beaming face of Bubbles.

Presently Bubbles got hold of James and said, "I dangled your philosophy before Ida like a bait to see if she would rise to it, and she swallowed it whole. We have been reveling in your system, and we have two facts that we want to add to it from our own personal observation. One is that dreams are very useful in helping us to understand the world, and that they also prove to us that this imperfect world need not be the only kind of universe that we may have experienced."

James said, "That is very good, and gives me great hopes that you will be able to help people to enjoy life by knowing about the system. What is your second fact?"

Bubbles screwed his mouth into a queer smile as he answered, "The other fact is that people are allowed to be in love in order to let us see that a union of thoughts and a mutual sympathy is far more real and perfect than anything. It is too wonderful. You look at everything from another standpoint, so much better. You have no respect for either space or time, a minute and eternity are indifferent. All the puppets are trivial, and it is only the real Self of any one that matters. I know that this is incomprehensible until you are in love. Of course you do not know what I mean, because you have been too practical to fall in love, but take my word for it and do not be sceptical; it is true."

I noticed a distant look in James' eyes as he forced a smile and answered, "All right, Bubbles, I'll take your word for it."

Afterwards Bubbles said to James, "Now I want you to do us a favour for Ida's sake; to tell us what our previous existence was, and to explain why we were put into this world, and why cruelty is permitted, and explain all the other puzzles. You say you can see the whole thing clearly. Make it clear to us, even if you do not succeed farther than to let us see that some explanation of it all is possible."

Urged in this way James said, "I am afraid, Bubbles, that what you are asking for leads us beyond philosophy and to a certain extent must be guesswork. Put some more logs on the fire, Bunny" (a cold evening had set in, and we were all sitting in the dusk round the large open fireplace in the saloon), "and come here, Ida, and sit in front of me so that I can see if I make myself clear. That is better. Now, Bubbles, I fear that what you ask me to tell you would only be a guess of my own. The philosophy cannot take you with certainty into the unknown, although it may point to you the direction in which the road lies."

MARY. "But do you mean to say that, after all you told me about Baby and our previous existence, you have not got an opinion as to what that existence was?"

JAMES. "Of course I have, but in finding it I have gone rather outside of philosophy."

MARY. "Do tell us, tell Ida, about your guesses."

JAMES. "Are you really very anxious to know?"

MARY. "Rather. Do be a good boy, and tell us."

Then James went on to tell us the most wonderful and satisfying story of our life before we came into the world. He said, "Where do you wish me to begin? As Bubbles has told Ida about the system, we may start with the knowledge that if we were not so absorbed in our puppets, and if we did not come to do all our thinking in a new language with the puppet's capabilities as our alphabet, we might each know the whole

scheme of the world as it is understood in the universal-thinking.

“And when we had no puppets, that is to say, before we were born, we, with all the other individuals who have not taken puppets in hand, were engaged in contemplation and enjoyment of all the wonderful universes that may have been successively evolved in the universal-thinking.

“My guess is that, as Bubbles says, the present world is only one out of many universes that have been in succession the objects of our contemplation and enjoyment, awaking in us emotions of joy, wonder, admiration, and awe. My notion is that none of these universes would be less beautiful, less interesting, less real, or less enjoyable than this one, and each of them would have served some special purpose. Some of them were perfect in every particular, others contained imperfect beings as this one does. Many of these universes may have had no resemblance whatever to the present one. Some

may have been all beauty of colour or of form; others all music and rhythm and love, without any human beings as we see them. A few may have been universes, like this one, of law and of cause and effect; in another the unexpected may always have been happening, a surprise universe like some dreams; or we may have lived in a ludicrous world where life was one round of laughter. In one case there may have been only two dimensions in space, a kind of flatland; in another there may have been four dimensions in space; and for all I know time might have more ways of working than merely forwards and backwards. These are merely some of the possibilities that our imagination conjures up.

“Then, again, I like to think that there may have been some universes that are inconceivable in their perfection, and cannot be described in earthly language, based upon ideas more enthralling and entrancing than form or colour, music or language, action or repose, reasoning or imagination; more enjoy-

able and engrossing than love or pleasure; sport or study; art, literature, or science; beyond the power of us mortals to conceive.

“My guess is that the dominant-thinking or the creating power, and the other Selves who are in harmony, have been for ever enjoying a progressive series of most heavenly conceptions of universes, as real as this one, and are all in the perfect enjoyment of mutual sympathy and love and agreement in all of their wishes. Each one is contemplating and enjoying the creations of the dominant Self. At the same time each Self may be said to be evolving by his own desire the next step of progress; for, since the wish of any one of these Selves is the same as the wishes of all, each one may be said to be engaged in the act of creating by his wish, and of seeing his creations completed, and accepted as the universal-thinking by all who are in harmony.

“This state of existence is the Nirvana of the Buddhist, and the Heaven of every race acknowledging a God.”

Mary said, "Do stop oneminute, James, while we try to take in all that. This is very wonderful. But why was *our* world thought of?"

James continued, "I can only guess, but I have two clues to work upon. Firstly, I see that for some reason our world has not been evolved as the most perfect; otherwise many people including myself would not be admitted. And, secondly, this world full of imperfect beings is one essentially of law, of cause and effect, in which every action has a necessary consequence."

Mary said, "We all admit that, it is evident. But how do these two clues help you in your guess?"

James answered, "If some of us are not perfect, and produce unhappiness by our acts, I ask why we should have been put into a world of cause and effect, where we are necessarily responsible for the result of our acts. It looks so much more natural to put us into a universe where we could do no harm."

Archie said, "It seems to me that the answer to that question must be the key to the riddle."

James replied, "You are quite right, and when we admit that we are not perfect in this world, and that we may act from selfish motives, or it may be from a mere spirit of contradiction, this conduct may clearly result in unhappiness to others, and is against the wishes of the dominant powers. We become a discord in their harmony. Do you see?"

MARY. "Yes, discord in the symphony of the Nirvana."

JAMES. "Very good. And if we are so now, then before we were born we were just as much out of harmony with the Nirvana, or the creating power, and all who wish and think the same."

MARY. "And this world was thought of to let us learn where our own happiness would lie?"

JAMES. "Bravo, Mary, you have hit upon the key. Our want of sympathy with the dominant Selfs, and our desire to change the

character of the universes as they were being evolved, would be discord to the others. And at the same time each of us was impotent to make any change against the overwhelming force of the wishes of all the others. I have no doubt that in my own case I felt this to be very galling and it made me utterly miserable and rebellious.

“You see, I wanted to have a share in working these universes, and I refused to believe that my plans would not be the best, and please all the others. And yet the dominant powers, or power, however much he may have felt for me, could not sacrifice everything to my will. He had probably done much to bring many of the Selves into harmony with the universal-thinking by the fact that each successive universe had shown forth the ideals in some new light. Many had thus been led to think and to wish in harmony with the universal-thinking, but a vast number of us remained outside, each one believing that he could do much better.”

Here James stopped for a moment, and told us that in what he was going to say he would talk of the dominant power, although the philosophy has not yet told us whether the universal-thinking is controlled by one or many Selves, or it may be by a mere law of evolution. He would use that word for clearness of description, and as being his own belief.

Then he continued, "Let us now see the result of this discontent. The dominant power and the army of co-workers were sorry for me and for the others who were in the same position. He had absolute power over the universal-thinking or creations of universes, but had no power over the wishes and desires of the individual Selves. So he put before us perhaps the only possible plan by which we could become united. This was no less than the invention of a world of cause and effect, filled with working puppets, where each of us should be allowed to control part of the world by the actions of one of the puppets and should be responsible for his actions. I can well

believe that so soon as this proposal was made we accepted gladly, and begged to be allowed this amount of power, just to show how perfect our own plans would prove to be."

Bessy asked how this was going to make for harmony and happiness, and Mary said, "Don't you see, Bessy? It is lovely. Do go on and tell them, James. I see it all."

James then continued: "My guess is that the dominant power would warn us that such a world of divided power with so many wills clashing must contain much misery; and as our object in being there would be to change things in accordance with our own wills, we could not expect to find this new world satisfactory to us, nor could we expect to be simply let alone in it. But we were still so confident each in himself that we continued to beg for this new world. I can believe that he may have told us he knew well that we were all really good fellows at heart, each wishing to give effect to the best ideals we were capable of, but with wrong ideas about trying to mould

the universal-thinking; and he feared that our experiences would often be very terrible. But these experiences would teach us another way of reaching harmony, by moulding our own wishes so as to make for the well-being of all instead of trying to mould the dominant power; and, lastly, when once we should reach that stage of absorption in the harmony of the universal-thinking, then we should be ready to enjoy all the creations of universes, feeling ourselves part of the creating power working all together in sympathy and affection and perfect agreement, a harmonious whole."

Here James paused for a moment, passed his bright eyes over each of our company, who were now eagerly attentive, and continued: "I can imagine the cordiality, pleasure, and good-fellowship with which this plan was made and received. Then, perhaps, the details were told in this way:

"I am now going to create a new universe quite perfect in its original design, and based so completely upon cause and effect that you

might trace back the history it would have had even in the past ages of eternity, like a continuous evolution by law. This is to make it clear that cause and effect are to be supreme, and to make the actor know that he is responsible not only for his act, but also for its consequences. I will create thoughts of this complete world, and I will fill it with puppets playing different parts, and any one of you may have perfect freedom to control the acts of one of the puppets in accordance with the laws that are to regulate this world, and to that extent I delegate to you my power to change the course of events. I do not, I cannot, take away anything from your knowledge of the universal-thinking. I do not, I cannot, add to your power of willing. But I will no longer oppose my wishes to the attainment of your desires to act, as I have done in other universes.

“You have power to withdraw your thoughts from parts of the universal-thinking, and to confine your thoughts to your puppet’s

experiences. Then you will come to use those experiences for regulating your desires. Your wills must often clash, and this can only result in great misery. But I know that you will face these trials with energy and courage, as being part of what you have begged for, and as being experiences to teach you what to wish for. It may become a hard and cruel world, and you must expect to be interfered with and to find things going wrong. But you have a grand opportunity, and if you are plucky, and are true to your best selves, you will come out splendidly ; and we will watch your progress, and will be prepared to have you join us later in wonderful universes, free from discord and perfect in every way ; and then you will be able to laugh with joy when you think over your success in meeting what you had to go through in the world where all your wills were clashing.

“I only wish there were a way of securing your happiness without going through so much. But you know that I am trying to help you, and I know that you are able and willing,

and will follow your best instincts, and are not so obstinate as to refuse to acknowledge your mistakes when they are proved by your experiences. Go then, and take with you my best wishes and the best wishes of all of us who are already in harmony. You will have great power in this new universe. Learn to use that power for your own real happiness, and the world will be the better for your having been in it, and you will be in harmony with us."

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James was silent. For a minute no one spoke. Then Ida rose, went up to James, took his hand in both of hers, "I thank you from the depths of my real Self." Then, turning round, with a gay smile she said, "Bubbles, can we live together upon that basis?"

Bubbles put his arm round her and said, "Nothing can separate us. So long as we are in love we are getting so much the nearer to the Nirvana. I am only sorry for the people who are not in love. This makes it so much easier for you and me, Ida, to see what James means."

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CHAPTER XVI

MORE LIGHT

WE were all much impressed by James Gordon's latest performance. None of us had expected such a development from his theory of babies, although it was quite clear that some such development was bound to follow.

A few of us were sitting in Bessy's boudoir discussing James Gordon's system. None of us felt ourselves competent to criticise it. We knew that he had given us only the results of his enquiries without the full arguments which had led him to these beliefs, and we could easily see that there were many other directions in which he must have worked before arriving at the results he had given us. Dr. Brown said, "I think we can all say this much, that he has given us a perfectly consistent system, logically worked out, perfectly

intelligible, and most satisfying. And what is more, his system differs from others that I have heard advanced, which are not complete, and where arguments are too often replaced by illustrations or analogies, and where the most important links in the chain of argument are left out, to be filled in, as the author hopes, by some future discovery."

Bessy has a remarkably clear head, and at this point she pushed away the patience-cards with which she had been playing, and said, "Look here, James, I only half understand what you have told us, and every time that I find myself in a fog, it is because I do not understand some word that you use."

JAMES. "Well, Bessy, let me know what it is and I will explain."

BESSY. "There is quite a number of words that I am not sure of. First, what do you mean by your Self?"

JAMES. "That depends upon your point of view, on the people you are with at the time when you use the word."

BESSY. "Does not that sound rather like nonsense?"

JAMES. "Not a bit. From the social plane, my Self means my body.

"From the practical plane, it means the Will that controls my Body.

"From the intellectual plane, it is the Judgment that directs my will.

"From the ethical plane, it is the bundle of preferences, or of likes and dislikes, that controls my judgment.

"And from the philosophical plane, my Self is not my body, nor my will, nor my judgment, nor my preferences; but it is that free, irresponsible power of knowing and of adding to the universal-thinking, and of choosing the preferences, which direct the judgments, which create the desires, which make my body act in a certain way."

MADGE. "Fire, fire, burn stick; stick, stick, beat dog. . . ."

BESSY. "Don't interrupt, Madge. Well, James, that is quite clear. There is no

difficulty in following you. Now tell me, to whom do you allow Selves or free-wills or souls besides living human beings?"

JAMES. "There you puzzle me. I daresay that animals have all got free-wills."

BESSY. "But, supposing they have not souls to govern the acts of their puppets, who does?"

JAMES. "In that case, all their acts are a part of the universal-thinking, and there may be many men in the same case, who are worked just the same as we see the flowers growing."

BESSY. "I suppose you do not allow souls to flowers?"

JAMES. "I should not like to say that it is impossible, but such ideas are mere fancies, and do not help us. The stones and rocks might be in the same case. It is foolishness to discuss it."

BESSY. "Tell me, next, who else have souls or free-will besides us in this world?"

JAMES. "All the people who have ever lived, or who ever will live, on this world

in charge of puppets. And, besides them, a number of others who are quite content with things as they are, and who do not want to change them, or to take charge of a puppet."

BESSY. "Do you mean Angels?"

JAMES. "If you like to call them so. The name won't do any harm."

BESSY. "Now I feel that I am getting on to firmer ground. My next question is, What do you mean by the dominant thinking power?"

JAMES. "By that expression I mean the Self (or it may be the Selfs) who controls the universal-thinking. The dominant thinking is the creating power. Every Self, like yours or mine, has the power of creating by his acts a part of the universal-thinking. But he cannot think hard enough to overcome the dominant power."

BESSY. "In fact, by the dominant thinking power you mean God."

JAMES. "Yes, in a sense; only the philosophy, so far as I have told it to you, has

hardly defined the creating power in that sense. There are several possibilities. The dominant power may be one dominant Self, dominant from past eternity.

“Or, it may be one Self who has acquired that position by contest for the control of the universal-thinking.

“Or it may be one Self who has brought to agreement with him an overwhelming number of other Selves; or who, you may say, has been accepted by an overwhelming number of other Selves.

“Or, lastly, the dominant thinking power may be no one Self, but only the overwhelming voice of the Selves who are in sympathy and agreement.

“I am afraid I am not making myself clear. If so, tell me. We have something like a choice between absolute monarchy, either hereditary, or by right of conquest, or by election; and on the other hand a republic.”

BESSY. “You are quite clear, James, and now I see pretty well how we stand. You

wish to leave the religious question for future explanations. But now you have got to tell me what you mean by the universal-thinking, or world-thoughts."

JAMES. "When we gave up the idea of a separate material existence for things, we gave up the ordinary idea of a creation of matter out of nothing; and we were left with the idea of a mental conception of material things and of the laws of nature which were created for the evolution of events in the mental world. Is that clear?"

BESSY. "I think so. The mental image of the world was created in thought, and also the rules by which it changes. Is that right?"

JAMES. "Yes, quite good. If, after that time, no free-will changed things, then a perfect mind, knowing the created world and the laws of change, would have no more thinking to do. The perfect mind would then know the state of the world from eternity to eternity."

BESSY. "I see that."

JAMES. "But your free-will, and mine, and that of other people, have been making changes not foreseen at the creation. These independent creations of events are communicated by telepathy from any one of us to all the others; and each of the others finds it best to leave most of this information to his or her subconscious knowledge, and to store for future use only the parts that he can note as affecting the senses of his puppet. He found from experience that it was best to choose this way of selecting most easily, from out of the universal knowledge, those parts of it which he could use in future acts."

BESSY. "But I do not see where your universal-thinking comes in."

JAMES. "I am rather glad you do not. For it would probably have led you to think of an independent thinker, which is quite unnecessary."

"The universal-thinking is the subconscious knowledge which we all possess about every material thing, and every event, in the

world. It consists of three things: the condition of the world at any one date; the laws of change; and the later creation of events by us irresponsible Selfs.

BESSY. "Do you mean that each of us is thinking out the succession of events in the world?"

JAMES. "If you do not mind, I will postpone making any assertion. I would prefer to let you see the alternative ways of looking at the matter. In following out all events in the world, every perfect mind is already informed about everything, excepting the future irresponsible acts of you, me, and the others. Its knowledge of these will be received from each of us directly. Now, your Angels, as you call them, are perfect in thinking power, and so are *fully* conscious of all thoughts of what is going on. We mortals have the same perfect power, but we limit our range in paying attention to what is going on. But still we have subconscious knowledge of everything.

"It comes to this now. There may be only

one universal-thinking of these thoughts, and you and I and the others are conscious of them. Or, if you like it better, each Self is thinking out the evolution either consciously, like the dominant power, or sub-consciously, like you and me."

BESSY. "I am afraid I do not see quite what you mean. You are not so clear as usual."

JAMES. "It is because I fight shy of going against what is generally accepted by professed philosophers. But, really, my view is the same, or at least the difference is too trivial to make a separation, or to divide us into sects.

"Some people think that there is only one great process of thinking going on, and they call this Absolute Mind. Now, when Mind is thinking of a house as defined by *what any puppet can do with it*, it is acting in a limited or finite manner through your consciousness or mine. But, when Mind is thinking of a house without that limitation, it uses a differ-

ent set of categories, and classifies the properties of a house under attributes of universal application, and this is how the universal-thinking is always working. So we may be looked upon as a sort of finite part of the universal-thinking, which is only a process, not a person.

“My view is that each Self is thinking (consciously or subconsciously) the events of the world, and the Selves are all in telepathic communication. I expect that if we were to look into it deeply we should find that it is the same as the other view, though perhaps easier to understand.”

BESSY. “Thank you, James. I follow you all right when you see what I want to get at, and answer my questions straight. Now tell me if I am right.

“Every Self, before his powers were limited at birth, had the power of creating things or events (I suppose I ought to say of creating thoughts of things or events).

“But if his thoughts were not acceptable

he has to keep them going by his unaided efforts.

“Meanwhile, all the other Selves are dunning his ears (telepathically) with their creations.

“And especially the dominant Self, and the crowd of Selves in harmony with the dominant Self are bombarding him with one set of thoughts about creation of events.

“So he (poor fellow) cannot maintain his solo against the orchestra of the dominant Selves, who are all playing the same tune.

“So that the dominant Selves go ahead, paying no attention to any solo, while the soloist cannot follow his own leadership, and is forced to take part in the universal-thinking.

“It was only when the dominant Selves agreed to accept my creations of events through my puppet that my creations ceased to be entirely futile.

“From that time I had to think about things in connection with my puppet’s power to know them and to alter them. This, and my interest in keeping my puppet in working

order, limited my attention, or my practical knowledge, to the sensations of my puppet. Will that do?"

JAMES. "I declare, Bessy, you have the clearest head of any one I know, when once you make up your mind to get to the bottom of a thing. In fact, you seem to be so acute to-day that I should like to see if I can explain intelligibly to you my ideas of what a Self can do."

BESSY. "All right. Let me hear. I will do my best."

JAMES. "We agreed that Self is an absolutely irresponsible, independent, and inconsequential approver or disapprover of every thought presented to, or imagined by, its consciousness."

BESSY. "Go on. I have got hold of that."

JAMES. "This approving or disapproving means recognition of *harmony* or *discord* between an object of thought and the Self's irresponsible preferences of the moment."

BESSY. "I see. Go on."

JAMES. "The words *harmony with Self* or *discord* thus become a basis of comparison between two separate objects, and the criterion of identity, or degree of difference, and a basis of logic. You know what I mean?"

BESSY. "Yes, I think I do."

JAMES. "Then these two words (harmony with Self or discord) also become equivalent to preference, or a desire, or a wish, or an act of will."

BESSY. "I see."

JAMES. "The same words define the emotions of love, hate, dread, hope, regret, satisfaction, and so on."

BESSY. "Quite."

JAMES. "So it appears that my recognition of harmony or discord between objects of thought on the one hand, and my irresponsible preferences of the moment on the other hand, are (besides mere knowing) my only performances in the world, though their form may vary, and they may appear as intellect, will, or emotion."

BESSY. "I have got hold of it quite well. That seems to be a great simplification over our usual way of thinking about these things that seem so complicated.

"You know, James, I sometimes think that you must be a fraud. All that you have told me to-day as to the meaning of Self, and the dominant thinking power, and what the universal-thinking is, seems too clear and simple when you get to the root of it, and I can't help agreeing with you. This makes me suspicious. It reminds me of a time when I once sat on the bench, at the Old Bailey, and heard the final speeches of two great lawyers on a murder trial. The first one seemed to prove his case until the other man got up, when the case seemed certain to go his way. And then the judge summed up against *him*; and I saw that logical arguments were a very poor thing to trust to if you want to get at the truth."

JAMES. "You are quite right, and would be right in mistrusting me if I were retained

by a fee, or had any interest in taking one side.

“At the same time it is true that I have shown to you only the result at which I have arrived. If I were explaining my views in a philosophical treatise, I would try to give the two speeches of opposing counsel, and would then sum up like the judge.”

CHAPTER XVII

LAST WORDS

AND now, most patient reader, we have wandered together over the pleasant paths that led sometimes to amusement, sometimes to more serious thought during an enjoyable visit to Knock Castle that lasted about a month. It was a really pleasant time, enjoyed by us all, because, as it seemed to me, there never was a more charming party collected together. I suppose that all of the guests must have had their faults, but they were undiscoverable by me. In the sketchy way in which I have described our doings it is impossible for you to realize the enjoyable character of the life we led. You would hardly guess what a large part was played by the brats in their influence upon all our doings. It was they who organized the picnic parties

and the fishing excursions, these grand games with kites, the early morning walks and the bathing, and many other incidents which had to be omitted in this account.

You would hardly be able to guess what a busy time both Archie and Bessy had in fulfilling their duties each morning. Archie was at work always for an hour or two before breakfast upon the great correspondence which was added to by his position as Lord Lieutenant of the county. Bessy, too, by her correspondence seemed to me to be managing the domestic affairs of one-quarter of the Kingdom of Scotland, besides all that she did in work of a helpful kind for the people of the district. It has always seemed to me that socially Scotland can be divided into about four territories, in each of which the proprietors and other families are bound together by a closer friendship and relationship than is common in England, while those in the different divisions of Scotland, although perfectly well acquainted, are nevertheless separated

by that ancient spirit of clanship which distinguished the country in former days. Bessy seemed to me to hold within her grasp with a pretty close touch all the important interests, domestic and otherwise, of the part of Scotland to which she belonged.

Then the Malcolms, too, had even more far-reaching duties to attend to, not only in their charming old home in the Eastern Highlands, but also in the south of England, while Jack Malcolm had very serious matters to deal with in connection with his candidature for a seat in Parliament in a Scottish county.

I mention these matters because I would like you to feel some interest in those who have ever been my greatest friends, and in the hopes that some day, should these few pages gain your approbation, we may meet again and follow the fortunes of some of these dear people farther.

At the period when my story closes we were approaching the 12th of August, that auspicious date from which the better-known

life in the Scottish Highlands begins. Our party was naturally broken up, each set having to go elsewhere to meet their engagements. Luggage was piled up in the saloon, and before the day was over all the visitors had left the house.

James Gordon was the last to leave, and while smoking a pipe with me before starting he said a few words with which I may conclude. And here I ought to say that in James Gordon, as has been said of some one else, there was nothing that savoured of the harshness of pedantry or the petty vanities of dogmatism. His clear soft voice, joined to a manner of singular gentleness, gave to you the idea of a dignified humility even when his words at times would assume a tone indicating a most positive persuasion of the truth of what he uttered.

In our last conversation he spoke to me of the absorbing interest he had had in science during the whole of his life, and of the privilege it had been to be in intimate contact with some

of the matter. It was
 very strange. The
 science said that
 of fact it was not
 into a general theory.
 He said that the
 present case was
 to disprove the
 said at the time
 to such a degree
 tions were concerned
 work in could be
 a failure. James
 in his scientific
 ments and in his
 tem of philosophy
 him or to let him
 doubts and difficulties
 way out even though the
 wrong.

He told me that he would
 to have talked so freely about
 Knock had it not been for the matter

by our friends, that he had often in his life had ambitions in one direction or another, and tasted the pleasure of having accomplished that which he set out to do, in spite of many obstacles. But he added that all of these joys would be eclipsed if he could help others a little to embark upon the study of philosophy, which, he said, could become a source of more complete satisfaction and intellectual delight than any of the other sciences.

He said that of course in these conversations we had touched only the fringe of the subject, but it would be enough for him if he had succeeded in putting before some of us enough to let them see that we are apt to look upon our relationship to the world from the crude standpoint adopted by our savage ancestors.

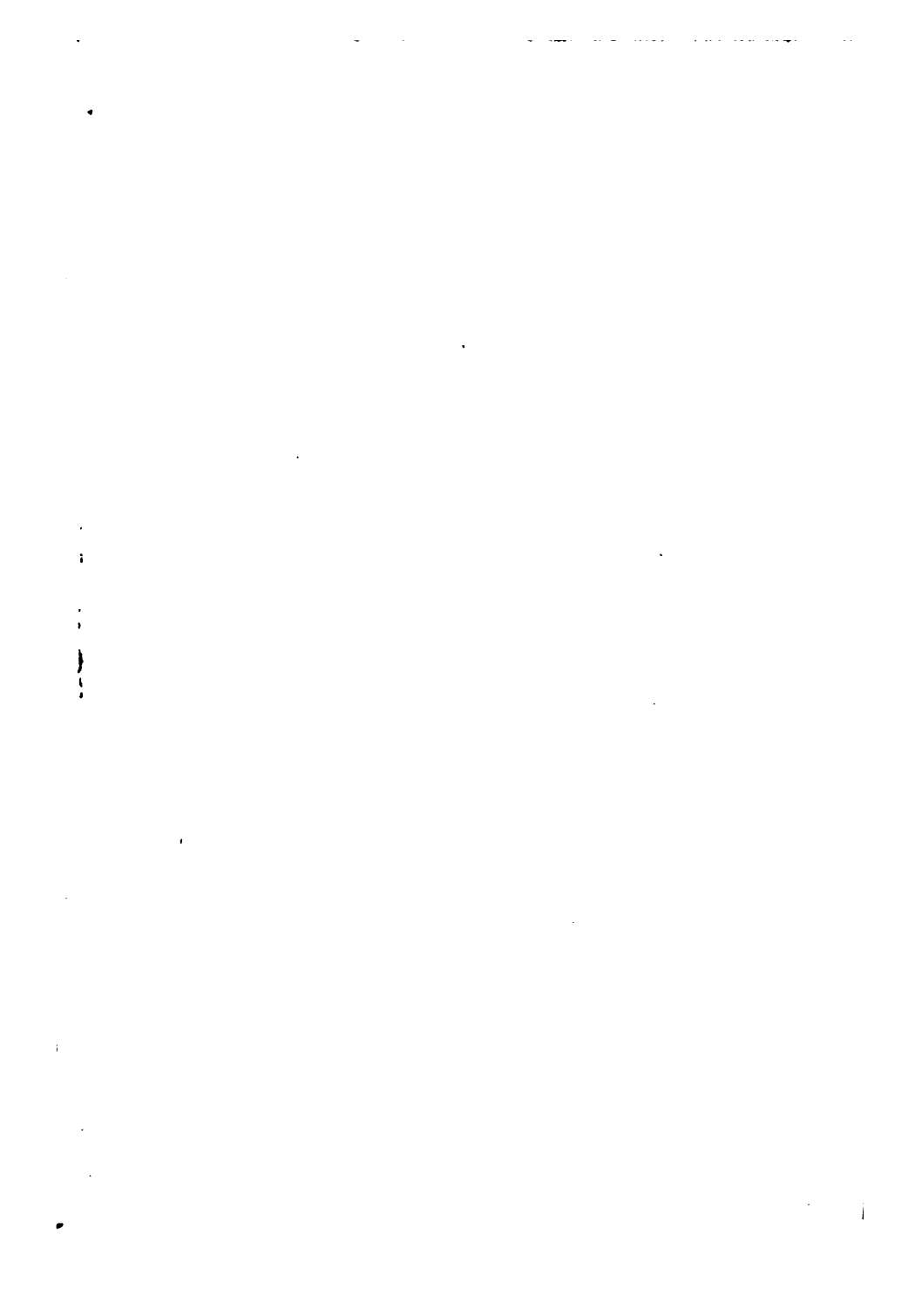
It was now time for James Gordon to leave us, and he was taken possession of by Archie, Bessy, and the brats, who let him go only on the strictest promise that he should come back soon and tell us some more about his system

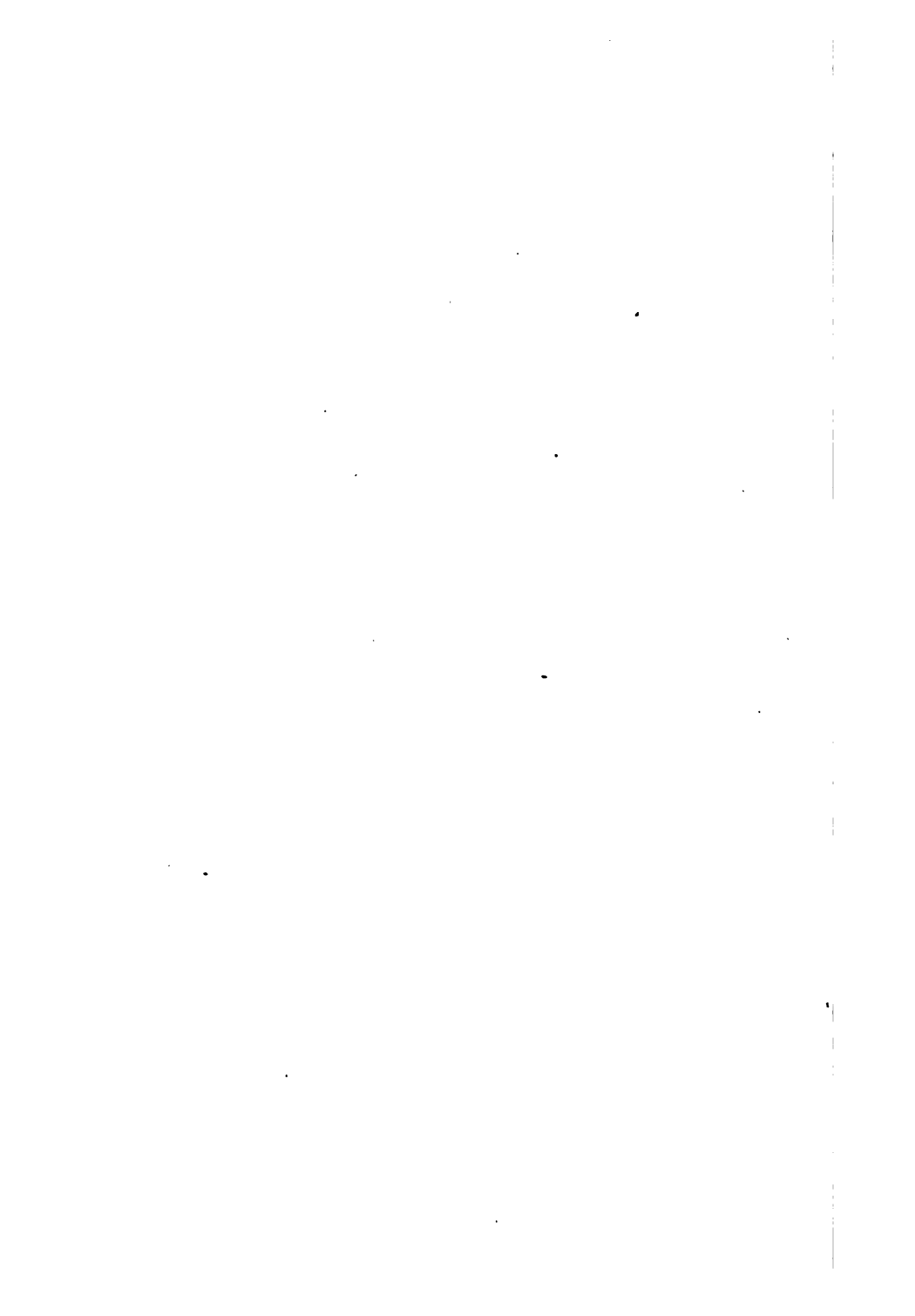
of philosophy, and help us once more in our amusements as well as in our studies.

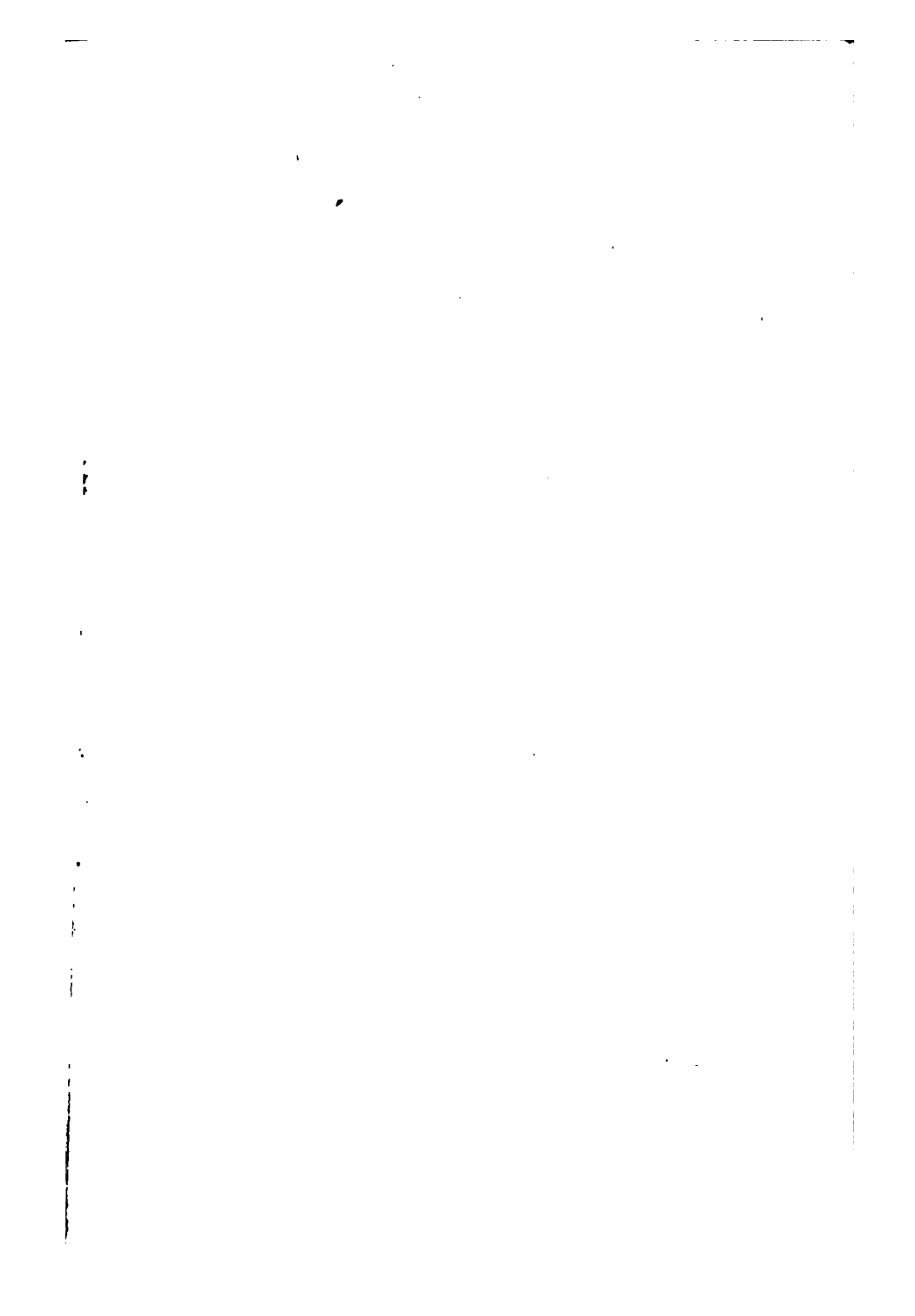
I must not close this narrative without recalling an event which is another proof of the happiness that reigned generally in our party during the period of which some account has been given. Before the party broke up, when we were all assembled in the saloon, Jack Malcolm and Evelyn Stuart came to tell us a piece of news. They had been carrying on their experiments on telepathy with some diligence, but, having come to the conclusion that it was impossible for them to communicate with each other when separate, they had decided that the only alternative was that in future they should never be too long separate. This was the way in which they announced to us their engagement. It was received with the greatest joy by all of us, and the congratulations showered upon them were hardly less cordial than those we had already bestowed on the other couple.

It only remains to say that both weddings

were celebrated before the end of the year, and I must have failed to give any idea of the popularity of the principals if the truth be not anticipated that the wedding of Lord Fintrae and Miss Ida Porter from Glen Buie was marked by an enthusiasm that was shared, not only by the numerous relatives who assembled for the occasion, but also by the whole countryside.







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